Democratically Engaged Community-University Partnerships: Reciprocal Determinants of Democratically Oriented Roles and Processes

Lina Dee Dostilio

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DEMOCRATICALLY ENGAGED COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS:
RECIPROCAL DETERMINANTS OF DEMOCRATICALLY ORIENTED
ROLES AND PROCESSES

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Education

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Education

By

Lina D. Dostilio

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DEMOCRATICALLY ENGAGED COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS:
RECIPROCAL DETERMINANTS OF DEMOCRATICALLY ORIENTED ROLES AND PROCESSES

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Despite calls for concerted, two-way engagement and for the development of reciprocal partnerships between institutions of higher education (IHE’s) and their communities, IHE’s continue to implement a disparate menu of activities that prove largely ineffective at addressing society’s most challenging social and environmental problems. A relatively new conception of engagement lays out a framework by which IHE’s engage with communities in democratic ways. Democratic engagement values inclusive, reciprocal problem-oriented work that brings together university and community stakeholders as co-generators of knowledge and solutions. The resulting democratically engaged partnerships position diverse members to take on roles as
collaborators and problem solvers. They are mutually transformed through the processes of reciprocation, power diffusion, and knowledge generation.

How these democratically oriented roles and processes emerge and come to be enacted is unknown. Neither the literature on democratic engagement nor that on community-university partnerships addresses this gap. This dissertation study purposefully selected a case of community-university partnership that has a high degree of democratic engagement. Through interviews, observation, and document review, qualitative evidence was collected of the ways in which the roles and processes of democratically engaged partnerships emerged and were enacted. Atlas.ti 6.2 was used to code and retrieve themes related to democratic and technocratic engagement, stakeholder roles and processes, and the emergence and application of roles and processes.

Understanding how democratically oriented roles and processes emerge and are adopted is critical to building democratically engaged partnerships that support systems of democratic engagement. If we do not know how to be democratic within our partnerships, and if we cannot teach others, we will not be able to answer the calls for more purposeful, reciprocal engagement with our communities.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Charlie Yacovelli. My father is the person who taught me how to be curious and how to work ridiculously hard; how to care about people and their stories; and how to laugh at myself. Had I not learned these lessons I would not have wanted to write this dissertation, or would have been able to do so. My father is responsible for my appreciation for this case and the important work RiseNature is doing to preserve unique natural resources. You see, dad has a relationship with the natural world, all of its creatures, and all of its wonders that cultivated within me the same deep connection.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPSL: Comprehensive Action Plan for Service-Learning

CBPR: community based participatory research

CCPH: Community Campus Partnerships for Health

CIC: Council of Independent Colleges

COPC: community outreach partnership centers

DEPs: Democratically engaged partnerships

HUD: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

IHE’s: institutions of higher education

LMX: Leadership-membership exchange theory

NOSC: National Outreach Scholarship Conference

SOFAR: Students, Organizations, Faculty, Administrators, Residents

TRES: Transformational Relationship Evaluation Scale

White Paper: The Democratic Engagement White Paper
Chapter One: Rationale for Study

During 2011, the issues of civic learning and democratic engagement in higher education were taken up as a national priority even as sharp criticism of the University of Syracuse’s civic mission was leveled by one of the premier higher education new outlets. Following more than fifty years of higher education being called to realize its democratic purposes, faculty expressed moral outrage that an institution of higher education would divert attention from intellectual isolation to collaborative knowledge generation.

In January 2011, I participated in a national roundtable at the US Department of Education to discuss the state of civic learning and democratic engagement within higher education. The American Association of Colleges and Universities called the gathering in cooperation with the Global Perspective Institute, Inc. During the discussions, we were asked to respond to a draft policy paper in which the democratic purposes of higher education and its responsibility to educate a civic-minded citizenry were outlined. Our responses drew upon our experiences as higher education administrators and community leaders. For the next year, we considered what a framework for civic learning and democratic engagement in the 21st century would look like, reviewed drafts of a report seeded by the policy paper, and were asked to make significant civic investments within our respective institutions. We were participating in a dialogue that would shape an agenda around the civic purposes of higher education at the national level.

That same year, I attended the National Outreach Scholarship conference, which is an annual academic meeting for faculty and administrators to advance discourse and practice on engaged scholarship. Engaged scholarship is the practice of academics and lay-experts coming together to generate solutions to public problems through scholarly
means. The NOSC meeting is a gathering space for private, public, land grant, and state-related institutions of higher education (IHEs) to share their engaged scholarship practices and to promote knowledge generation partnerships between higher education and local communities.

Discussions about the US Department of Education’s project on civic learning were heard throughout the conference halls, and many of the roundtable participants were also attendees at the conference. Then, on October 2, 2011 the attention shifted to that morning’s Chronicle of Higher Education in which one of the headlines read, “As Chancellor Focuses on the ‘Public Good’ Syracuse’s Reputation Slides” (Wilson, 2011). The article detailed how Nancy Cantor, Chancellor of Syracuse University, had focused on engaging the community at the expense of traditional education and scholarship.

The news story portrayed a topnotch private university that had attracted ivy-league graduates amongst its faculty and maintained a selective 50% acceptance rate of primarily well-to-do Northeastern United States students. According to the article, Cantor’s arrival in 2004 brought with it a local engagement agenda and an emphasis on diversifying the study body. Together, these priorities were seen to jeopardize Syracuse’s status as one of the nation’s best private urban schools.

Cantor’s engagement agenda and the changes made during her tenure at Syracuse are captured by the Institution’s new vision statement: “Scholarship in Action, a commitment to forging bold, imaginative, reciprocal, and sustained engagements with our many constituent communities, local as well as global” (www.syracuse.edu). Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on revitalization-gear projects within the local town of Syracuse. Local graduating high school students have been encouraged to attend
Syracuse through free tuition. The article portrays Cantor as promoting the University as a public good that is interconnected with the future of the town of Syracuse.

Beyond the article, much more evidence is found of Syracuse’s public scholarship agenda. The Syracuse website claims extensive partnerships with public, private, and non-profit sectors. It is home to Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life, a consortium of colleges and universities committed to public scholarship in the arts, humanities, and design. It regards itself as an Anchor Institution, a place-based institution with an interest in the local community such that it engages with that community to nurture revitalization and attract economic development through collaboratively addressing social issues (Netter Center for Community Partnerships, 2008). Syracuse expresses a commitment to educating prepared citizens, strengthening democratic institutions, diversifying its student body, and engaging multiple publics in collaborative knowledge generation.

In short, Syracuse University embodies many of the civic learning and democratic engagement elements that the US Department of Education (2012) includes in its seminal report, “A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future.” It is crafting a scholarly agenda that models engaged scholarship, particularly the type promoted at the National Outreach Scholarship Conference. However, Syracuse’s public agenda came under fire within the nation’s premier news outlet dedicated to higher education. Cantor’s commitment to Syracuse being a public good was questioned as being morally and financially inappropriate. An unidentified faculty person provided one of the most poignant quotes within the article, “My discipline is not the town of Syracuse. I’m an
intellectual, and I have a community of scholarship all over the world (Wilson, 2011, p. para. 25).”

These events -- the US Department of Education roundtables and resulting policy report, my participation in the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, and the Chronicle article on Syracuse University collided in my conscience to surface an urgent question: will higher education embrace its democratic purpose as a public good or will it serve as a loose confederation of intellectuals generating and disseminating knowledge outside of the political and social realities of the nation?

**Ten Moments Within Higher Education**

Within the history of American higher education, there have been trends that supported higher education being a vehicle for democracy and citizen development, the development of technical expertise, becoming a partner for social renewal and improvement, and generating immense research and development capacity. These trends are not necessarily antithetical, but may be challenging to one another. What follows is a discussion of ten moments that draw attention to how higher education has successfully (and unsuccessfully) promoted public and democratic purposes through engagement with its local communities.

**Figure 1: Ten Moments within Higher Education**

![Figure 1: Ten Moments within Higher Education](image-url)
Though Boyer (1996) points to the Colonial Colleges (circa 1636) as being established to promote the commonwealth, the most recent 50 years have offered a sequence of repeated interventions seeking engagement between higher education institutions and our country’s pressing problems. Tracing the legacy of such engagement back to the establishment of our country’s land-grant institutions, we begin to understand that higher education was not intended as a private good in this country (Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005) but was intended to promote public purposes. The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 provided the charter under which a strong system of higher education established place-based means to engage local development. The Wisconsin Idea took root shortly thereafter to produce research that was in consultation with the farmers, engineers, and citizens of the day. Following World War II, the President’s Commission on Higher Education produced a six-volume report that was grounded in the democratic purposes of higher education in America. Ideas about the type of scholarship necessary to achieve relevancy and integration with public purposes was described and detailed through Ernest Boyer’s work (1990; 1996). Presidents of public, private, two and four year institutions developed and signed the President’s Declaration of Civic Responsibility of Higher Education. The Kellogg Foundation sponsored a series of reports investigating the roots of state and land-grant universities. The final report sought to reclaim the mission of engagement and for such universities to become engaged institutions. And still, higher education struggled to answer these calls and to realize these goals. Though a myriad of service activities had been adopted and a significant engagement rhetoric was being used, full scale orientation toward a public purpose still eluded the vast majority of higher education. As a result, questions about the future of
civic engagement were put forward, specifically in a Wingspread report, entitled, “Calling the Question: Is Higher Education Ready to Commit to Community Engagement?” Six years later, the Democratic Engagement White Paper suggested that it was not, at least not while it was consumed with instituting adaptive programs and activities (indicative of the dominant paradigm of engagement) but being still unwilling to transform its core values and operations. It is within this historical context that the present study occurs. Each of these historical events is described here, in turn.

**The Morrill Acts and Wisconsin Idea.** The Morrill Act of 1862 was a congressional act under the Lincoln administration that supported the development of 69 land-grant schools in the north. The Act of 1890 established schools throughout the south as well as land-grant institutions for African Americans. Currently there are more than 100 land grant colleges and universities in the United States (Renaud, 2008).

The Acts incentivized the development of institutions of higher education whose mission was to invest in research that impacted domestic practices such as agriculture and infrastructure development for the nation (Kezar et al., 2005). Upon review of individual institutional histories of early land-grant colleges, Johnson (1981) found that students enrolled in Morrill Act colleges most often pursued courses of study within the liberal arts or common professions (those known as related fields of study) rather than agriculture and engineering. In fact, there was criticism of land-grants as being “a bundle of whimsies,” (p. 225) and Johnson notes their overall inability to spur agricultural innovation due to their failure to generate and disseminate applicable knowledge. One of the benefits, however, of the land grant system was their significant commitment to the
locale. These institutions were bound to the states in which they were founded and were place-based.

Shortly thereafter, the University of Wisconsin began to emphasize research that brought faculty into consultation with citizens and professionals of Wisconsin to produce research that addressed political, economic, and social needs of the state. This improved upon the approach taken by the burgeoning land-grant system, and the Wisconsin Idea became the model for the public service extension system (Kezar et al., 2005)

**President’s Commission on Higher Education.** Following World War II, President Harry S. Truman commissioned a report on higher education and its purpose given the unprecedented enrollments in higher education (Russell, 1949) and the need to educate an engaged citizenry (The Committee on Higher Education, 1947). The charge of the commission was to determine “the functions of higher education in our democracy and the means by which they can best be performed” (Reuben & Perkins, 2007, p. 265). Entitled, Higher Education for American Democracy, the report laid out three goals:

- Institutions of Higher Education] are to bring to all the people of the Nation:
  - Education for a fuller realization of democracy in every phase of living.
  - Education directly and explicitly for international understanding and cooperation.
  - Education for the application of creative imagination and trained intelligence to the solution of social problems and to the administration of public affairs. (The Committee on Higher Education, 1947, pp. I, 8)

**The Scholarship of Engagement.** Boyer recognized that within the mid-1990’s, higher education was concertedly pursuing any urgent national endeavor. In his seminal essay, “The Scholarship of Engagement,” he demands that higher education be a “more
vigorously partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and [that higher education] must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement.” (p. 11)

He substantiates this historic commitment by recounting various higher education leaders spanning from the colonial colleges to the elite institutions of Stanford and Princeton, all of whom point toward higher education as a system of institutions at the service of the practical needs of American society. Reflecting on his own thirty years as a higher education leader, he recounts the role higher education played in challenging the status quo through its service as a social critic. He declares that the vitality of higher education lies in its ability to meet a “larger purpose: to participate in the building of a more just society and to make the nation more civil and secure (p. 13).”

Boyer claims higher education has moved away from the scholarship of engagement toward private intellectualism. He suggests we need to hold fast to our intellectual independence while participating in real development of ideas across and outside the boundaries of the academy. To do this, he proposes we reclaim the scholarship of engagement.

The scholarship of engagement builds upon his work through the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in which Boyer acknowledges that scholarship has come to occupy a very narrow meaning, which is that of pure research. He portrays four models of rigorous scholarship that challenge the professoriate to consider generative, creative, encompassing work that seeks to meet society’s pressing needs. These include the Scholarship of Discovery: an area closest to the modern interpretation of research, in which investigation and inquiry to help us understand the
unknown; the Scholarship of Integration: the integration between disciplines and methods; the Scholarship of Application: the use of knowledge practically. He urges application to be understood as distinct from community activities he terms citizenship activities. Rather, application produces a two-way interaction: theory produces application and application produces theory. His fourth type is the Scholarship of Teaching: using all means to educate and to share knowledge, and enabling the whole academic environment (students, faculty, institutions) to be learners.

The Scholarship of Engagement is a fifth type of scholarship that positions the work of the academy toward more humane ends – practicable, social, vigorous scholarship that involves local communities so that together they produce significant impact on our pressing problems. Boyer promotes two ways to bring about the scholarship of engagement: the sharing of higher education’s intellectual and administrative resources with society’s areas of concerns and the realization of a higher purpose. He implores higher education to develop a larger sense of its social purpose and claims that it has to twine with civic culture to improve the “quality of life for all of us (p. 20).”

**President’s Declaration of Civic Responsibility of Higher Education.** The President’s Declaration of Civic Responsibility of Higher Education (Campus Compact, 1999) was drafted in 1999 and compiled by Campus Compact, a national organization dedicated to the civic purposes of higher education. The declaration is a tangible means for institutional presidents from all sectors of higher education to publicly claim their institution’s civic purposes. It reflects an answer to Boyer’s claim for the development of higher education’s larger purpose.
Since 1999, 565 college and university presidents have endorsed the declaration; they represent public, private, two-year, four-year, land grant, and state related institutions. The statement signifies that an institution is committed to its public purposes and the democratic ideal. It emphasizes the realization of these purposes through civic education of students, civic engagement by faculty, and partnerships with communities that address quality of life issues. It is a call for increased social stewardship on the part of higher education.

**Returning to our Roots Kellogg Report.** In 2000, an open letter (written by the members of the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities) was issued to the state universities and land grant institutions of higher education (Kellogg Commission, 1998). The thrust of this letter was to seek reclamation of their responsiveness to society’s problems through better organization and orientation of their efforts and resources.

A major contribution of the report was to emphasize that reciprocity and sharing with communities was necessary for success – it was not an optional orientation. The report stressed that the redress of social problems could not be accomplished by institutions of higher education working in isolation in the ways that had become comfortable. The report promoted the orientation of engagement, a two-way interaction between universities and the communities of which they were a part. This was a request for institutions to move beyond outreach and service.

**Calling the Question Wingspread Report.** Participants of a 2004 Wingspread conference on higher education’s engagement with communities recognized that despite the preceding calls for the development of democratic purposes, the reintroduction of the
scholarship of engagement, the efforts to develop institutional civic responsibility, and the emphasis on an engaged orientation, higher education had not yet widely transformed its institutions such that these practices and purposes would flourish.

The participants issued a report entitled “Calling the Question: Is Higher Education Ready to Commit to Community Engagement?” (Brukardt, Holland, Percy, & Zimpher, 2004). The report was not another call for action, but a realization that higher education was not changing to meet the demands for engagement. The report surfaced a question of whether higher education would, or could, adopt a spirit of engagement.

The questions the authors pose feature the thing we cannot seem to achieve:

A return to a mission in which the advancement of discovery, learning and the common good is fueled by collaborative partnerships is a vision that is right for our time and for a world that looks to higher education for clear direction (p. ii).

The report recommends six practices to realize the vision and commitment that has been called for in other landmark reports and commissions: 1. Integrate engagement into mission 2. Forge partnerships as the overarching framework for engagement 3. Renew and redefine discovery and scholarship 4. Integrate engagement into teaching and learning 5. Recruit and support new champions 6. Create radical institutional change (p. 1).

Among the six practices within the Kellogg report, the use of partnerships as the vehicle for engagement is a major contribution. Though community partnerships had previously been enacted, the definition of partnership provided within the report provided clear implications for the development of reciprocal, two-way relationships between universities and their local communities.
**Carnegie Classification.** Around the same time as the Wingspread report, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was beginning to develop a new classification system for higher education. The new system was to more adequately classify institutional similarities and differences and embrace the evolution of higher education that had occurred since the first Carnegie classification system was drafted (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006). In addition to the national classifications, they developed the first of a series of voluntary classifications, entitled “Community Engagement.” The community engagement classification was available to institutions that conducted a self-study of the ways community engagement was represented within foundational indicators (such as the institutional identity and culture as exemplified by high priority for engagement within the institutional mission) and the institution’s commitments (exemplified in budget systems, infrastructure, and strategic planning).

The advent of the community engagement classification was significant to the engagement movement and illustrated that the Carnegie Foundation saw engagement as a trend within higher education worthy of recognition and measurement. The classification was first offered in 2006 and was achieved by 76 colleges and universities for the ways in which they integrated engagement into curricular, outreach, and partnership initiatives. Of these institutions, most were unable to describe the ways in which they cultivated reciprocal relationships with communities beyond cursory or general terms (Driscoll, 2008).

In 2008, 119 institutions achieved the classification and in 2010, 115 institutions were awarded the classification. Upon review of the 2010 round of applications,
reciprocal partnerships were identified as a category of practice that was still in need of significant development (along with assessment, faculty rewards, and integration of engagement with other institutional initiatives) (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006).

The classification will again be offered in 2015, and institutions that had previously received the designation will be asked to reapply. In the 2015 framework, additional emphasis will be placed on evidence of reciprocal partnerships as well as the other areas of weakness noted in the 2010 review.

Democratic Engagement White Paper. In 2008, the Kettering Foundation and New England Resource Center for Higher Education held a meeting of higher education leaders to discuss the state of civic engagement within higher education. The meeting acknowledged the 2004 Wingspread report (Calling the Question) as one of the seminal moments in determining a course for engagement within higher education. The gathering was driven by one central question (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009): Why has the civic engagement movement in higher education stalled and what are the strategies needed to further advance institutional transformation aimed at generating democratic, community-based knowledge and action?

As a result of the conversation during the Kettering Foundation meeting, and as a means to push forward the critical questions about the state of civic engagement, the Democratic Engagement White Paper was drafted (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The White Paper’s central thesis is that civic engagement has stalled because it has not brought about institutional transformation such that higher education’s public purposes are regained or its processes to realize such purposes integrate a true appreciation of building
knowledge with people outside of the academy. Its main critique of civic engagement (and community engagement) is that it places too much emphasis on a program of activities occurring in a location, namely the community. What the White Paper seeks is a change to the core operations of the academy that enable inclusive, collaborative knowledge generation that furthers the democratic purposes of higher education.

**Statement of the Problem**

Despite the repeated calls and policy statements requesting that higher education reorient its efforts toward addressing public problems and embracing its democratic purposes, engagement of this sort is not occurring widely. Despite significant recent attention paid to the democratic purposes of higher education, criticism such as that written in the Chronicle of Higher Education is leveled against institutional attempts to reclaim a civic purpose (Wilson, 2011). Higher education has significantly shifted from a public-social mission to a private-economic mission (Ernest L. Boyer, 1996; Kezar, 2005).

**Purpose of the Research**

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to better understand how institutions of higher education can realize a public and democratic purpose through democratic engagement. Specifically, the study promotes the development of democratically engaged partnerships as one instrument to bring about a democratic engagement agenda within higher education.

One of the criticisms the Democratic Engagement White Paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) has of civic engagement is that it is conveyed through partnerships and mutuality. Two of those authors claim in their later work on democratic engagement (Saltmarsh &
Hartley, 2011) that engineering more effective partnerships will not bring about the democratic purposes missing within higher education. They state partnership development misses the mark of fundamental reorganization within higher education: it is simply another adaptation of business as usual.

Other works that establish the importance of democratic engagement within higher education celebrate the partnership as a vehicle for authentic engagement. Partnerships are seen as a medium for engagement (Kellogg Commission, 1998) and as a tool for mutual transformation of university and community stakeholders (Jameson, Clayton, & Jaeger, 2011). This study asserts that the general idea of partnerships is not problematic to democratic engagement, but that partnerships that rely on mutuality and a normative orientation for engagement are. This study illuminates the type of community-university partnership that is informed by, and can inform, democratic engagement: democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs). DEPs are defined as community-university partnerships that embody the roles, processes, and purposes of democratic engagement.

**Research Questions**

In order to better understand democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs), the following explanatory proposition and research questions are posed:

- **Explanatory Proposition:** The interaction between conditions external to the partnership, individual stakeholder attributes, and shared learning experiences will facilitate a partnership’s adoption of processes and roles indicative of democratically engaged community-university partnerships.
Research Question #1: How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?

Research Question #2: How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

Research Question #3: How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

Research Question #4: How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study is democratic engagement that is built on the values and practices of democracy. Democratic engagement puts forward a model that stands in contrast to the technocratic and normative paradigm of engagement. The democratic paradigm manifests the use of inclusivity, reciprocity, asset frameworks, collaborative epistemological stance, and intentional political consideration to promote the democratic purpose of higher education. Table 1 visually summarizes the contrasting elements of democratic and technocratic engagement as identified by four seminal works used to inform the discussion of democratic engagement within this study. These works include the Kellogg report on the engaged institution (Kellogg Commission, 1998), Weerts and Sandmann’s (2008) attempts to encourage a two-way form of engagement,
the Democratic Engagement White Paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), and Jameson, Clayton, and Jaeger’s (2011) development of the notion of mutually transformative partnerships within community engaged scholarship. These are discussed in turn.

Table 1: Democratic and Technocratic Engagement (adapted from Jameson et al, 2011*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Technocratic Engagement (Focused on Activity and Place; Normative Form)</th>
<th>Democratic Engagement (Focused on Purpose and Process; Emergent Form)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Relationships</strong></td>
<td>Mutuality</td>
<td>Reciprocity†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deficit-based understanding of community</td>
<td>Asset-based understanding of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic work done for the public</td>
<td>Public work done with the public†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applied</td>
<td>Inclusive, collaborative, problem-oriented†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unidirectional flow of knowledge</td>
<td>Multi-directional flow of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positivist‡: expert, technocratic</td>
<td>Constructivist‡: localized, contextual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology‡</strong></td>
<td>Distinction between knowledge producers and consumers‡</td>
<td>Co-creation of knowledge‡; development of co-roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primacy of academic knowledge</td>
<td>Community and academic knowledge are both considered‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University as the center of public problem-solving</td>
<td>University as a part of an ecosystem of knowledge production and public problem-solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Dimension</strong></td>
<td>Apolitical engagement</td>
<td>Inclusive, collaborative, and deliberative democracy; attends to power struggle through consensus building and dialogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1998, the Kellogg Foundation issued an open letter to the presidents of state universities and land grant colleges. This letter was one of a series in which these institutions were called to return to their roots as public serving institutions. In this particular missive, engagement and the pursuit of becoming an engaged institution were outlined. The narrative implores institutions to embrace the ideals of reciprocity, transformative change, and knowledge collaboration, and it was a critical development in the pursuit of more authentic engagement with the democratic purposes of higher education. The letter precedes, by more than a decade, the explicit framing of democratic engagement later taken on by Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton (2009) and further described by Saltmarsh and Hartley (2011) in their edited volume entitled, "To Serve a Larger Purpose": Engagement for Democracy and the Transformation of Higher Education. The contributions the Kellogg report makes are foundational to the body of work that encourages a more principled approach to community-university engagement.

Weerts and Sandmann’s (2008) multi-case study introduced empirical means to investigate the facilitators and challenges of adopting a more authentic form of engagement that they endorse as two-way engagement, which they describe as

The new philosophy emphasizes a shift away from an expert model of delivering university knowledge to the public and toward a more collaborative model in
which community partners play a significant role in creating and sharing knowledge to the mutual benefit of institutions and society. (p. 74).

The study qualitatively compared six cases (three land grant and three urban public research universities). The cases were located in three states located in Southern, Great Lakes, and Midwest regions of the United States. Data were collected in three phases and included interviews and document review. In the first phase, high-level administrators were interviewed to determine how engagement was conceived and implemented on the campuses. In the second phase, leaders of engagement initiatives were interviewed to determine how knowledge was exchanged with key constituencies. In the third phase, community partners were interviewed to gain perspective on issues of engagement. Comparative data analysis was used to identify themes across and within cases. Their findings indicate that the adoption of engagement agendas is influenced by language, leadership behaviors, organizational structures, and the development of boundary spanners who act as knowledge and power brokers.

Though this work also precedes the democratic engagement framework supplied by the White Paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009), it is critical to the understanding of democratic engagement used within this study because of its contribution of the distinctions between a unidirectional model of outreach and an integrative model of engagement.

Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton’s (2009) Democratic Engagement White Paper is the primary influence of the conceptual framework used within this study. Within the White Paper, civic engagement is critiqued as a means to remedy the failings of higher education to satisfy its public purpose. The White Paper suggests civic engagement can
be defined as having characteristic activities that occur in the community; it comes from an epistemology which “privileges the expertise in the university and applies it externally, through activities in the community;” and it deems relationships as partnerships and values mutuality (p. 7-8). Technocratic civic engagement, the type which leverages the expertise of higher education for the good of the community, differs from democratic engagement, the type that values “inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which academics share knowledge generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving” (p. 9). Democratic engagement is seen as an alternative to technocratic civic engagement. The White Paper also introduces this distinction as a difference between democratic engagement and technocratic engagement.

The White Paper posits that the purpose of higher education is to prepare citizens and to employ scholarship that addresses public problems and illuminates areas for social change. Civic engagement has fallen short of these goals for a number of reasons including, 1) the public does not push higher education to adopt this focus; 2) the movement does not have universally-used, well-defined language; 3) there are many, sometimes disparate, activities within the movement; 4) the movement is largely apolitical, and 5) higher education values disciplinary expertise and promulgates it in such a way that broad problem-solving for social change is minimized – the epistemology of higher education is not conducive to civic engagement.

The White Paper illuminates the norms of a democratic ethos, which include, “inclusiveness, participation, task sharing, lay participation, reciprocity in public problem solving, and an equality of respect for the knowledge and experience that everyone
contributes to education and community building” (p. 6). When the norms, processes, and purposes of democratic culture are applied to civic engagement, “democratic engagement” (p. 6) is created. Democratic engagement is inclusive of sources of knowledge external to university expertise; is critical of exclusion of community knowledge or knowledge-producers that are external to the university; its community partnerships are collaborative, problem-oriented, and value reciprocity; and it seeks to engage with the public to bring about a more democratic society. Civic engagement is a first-order change, one that does not disturb the current organizational features of higher education; democratic engagement necessitates a second-order change, one that transforms epistemology, scholarship, and pedagogy.

The final influence on the framework of democratic engagement as it is being used in this study is Jameson, Clayton, & Jaeger’s (2011) work on enacting community engaged scholarship through mutually transformative partnerships. Jameson et al. continue to draw apart the differences between technocratic and democratic paradigms and use this as one lens to understand what community engaged scholarship is within a democratic paradigm. They suggest that the most significant elements to be considered include the roles taken by the stakeholders who are involved, the partnership processes enacted, and the outcomes of the collaboration.

The influence of a democratic orientation on community engaged scholarship is portrayed by Jameson et al. as promulgating an ethos in which diverse knowledges are appreciated and considered; asset-based approaches build upon the strengths found within the environment as opposed to identifying problems or deficits; and the enterprise is one done with the public as opposed to for the public. These values promote a sense of
“withness”, or what Jameson et al. term co-creation. Stakeholders become “…co-educators, co-learners, and co-generators of knowledge. Working together in this way means that students, faculty, and community members share power and responsibility and communicate as equals across their various roles (p. 262).”

The primary focus of Jameson et al. is on the ability of such democratically engaged scholarship to bring about the mutual transformation of all involved stakeholders. Their definition of transformation rejects mutuality (in which stakeholders benefit separately from their shared interactions with one another). Instead, mutually transformative partnerships promote the growth of all involved. In this way, it is a counter-normative approach to community-university engagement.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study employs the conceptual framework of democratic engagement to the phenomenon of community-university partnerships to illustrate a form of community-university partnership that embraces and promotes a democratic paradigm. These partnerships are called democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs).

Democratic engagement as explained within the conceptual framework established here, has a reliance on inclusivity, reciprocity and shared authority for knowledge construction (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) and this reliance promotes particular stakeholder roles and processes for collaboration. The membership of a DEP involves a diverse array of community and university stakeholders. The roles that each occupies include collaborator, solution generator, knowledge producer, willing participant in problem solving, co-creator, co-learner, and co-educator.
To understand the influences exerted upon the partnership that encourage the emergence and application of such democratic processes and roles, the theory of reciprocal determinism is employed (Bandura, 1977, 1978, 1986). As will be discussed within the literature review, general community-university partnership literature identifies three factors that appear to influence such acquisition of roles and processes: a) learning, modeling and empowering that occurs among stakeholders; b) individuals’ partnership competencies; and c) social, political, and organizational conditions. These factors are easily mapped onto the reciprocal determinants identified by Bandura.

Reciprocal determinism provides a way to analyze human motivation, thought and action (Bandura, 1977, 1986). It is a social cognitive perspective:

Social cognitive theory embraces an interactional model of causation in which environmental events, personal factors, and behavior all operate as interacting determinants of each other. (Bandura, 1986, p. xi)

Bandura’s theory of reciprocal determinism portrays the interaction between these determinants as iterative: as personal and environmental factors interact, they determine behavior, which when enacted affects the environment and person. This interactive pattern is based on triadic reciprocality (Bandura, 1977) that associates behavior, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental factors within an iterative relationship. The determinants within this study correspond to the determinants within Bandura’s theory. Environmental factors are defined within this study as social, political, and organizational conditions. Behavior and cognitive factors are defined within this study as partnership learning interactions. Personal factors are defined within this study as individual stakeholder attributes. Together, they interact to influence the development
of democratically oriented roles and process, which according to the theory of reciprocal
determinism (Bandura, 1986), iteratively influence the conditions, partnership learning
interactions, and stakeholder attributes.

Reciprocal determinism differs from a unidirectional school of thought of
causality, such as environmental determinism championed by BF Skinner (1974) or
personal determinism (in which instincts, traits, or free choice solely determine a person’s
behavior). Bandura’s emphasis is on the interactivity between the determinants,
recognizing that each iteration of influence affects all of the parts.

As a means to shape the explanatory proposition, research questions, and analysis,
reciprocal determinism is a powerful lens to assist in making clear the complexity within
a phenomenon such as democratically engaged partnerships. The theory explains how the
conditions that surround a partnership combine with the partnership learning interactions
that occur within the partnerships as well as the individual stakeholder attributes to affect
the emergence of democratic roles and processes (see Figure 1). It also explains how the
democratic roles and processes found within the partnership affect the influence of
conditions, stakeholder attributes, and learning interactions. Perhaps its most important
contribution to the study is that it frames the analysis in such a way as to avoid
oversimplification. According to reciprocal determinism, it would be wrong to conclude
that one of the determinants is solely responsible for the development of democratic roles
and processes just as it would be wrong to assume that there was a linear influence
between any of the determinants and the roles and processes. Rather, it frames the
analysis in such a way as to promote interactivity and interaction between all three
determinants and the roles and processes that are developed.
According to Bandura (1983), reciprocality does not mean symmetry between the determinants. The determinants do not need to influence each other in equal measure in order to have reciprocally influenced one another. For example, “…when situational constraints are weak, personal factors serve as the predominant influence in the regulatory system” (p. 24). Further, reciprocality does not mean that the determinants influence each other simultaneously. This means that a study need not investigate all of the determinants of its concern at the same time, or expect that they will be active in the same measure at the same time.

Because the triadic factors do not operate simultaneously as a holistic entity, it is possible to gain some understanding of how different segments of two-way causation operate without having to mount a Herculean effort to study every possible interactant at the same time. (p. 25)

These comments on the strength of influence and timing of influence provide important indications for any study using the lens of reciprocal determinism. The complexity that is made clear by the interactive influence of the determinants is able to be further detangled to examine dyadic influences, different influences over time, and the effects of varying strength and simultaneity on the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships.
Significance of the Study

This study is significant because there is an urgent need to realize the democratic purposes of higher education through its engagement with public problems. The conflict portrayed at the beginning of this chapter brings to life the conflicting environment in which this will happen: higher education is being called upon within the national arena (and has been for more than fifty years) to embrace its public purpose and yet has not found a way to do so. The framework of democratic engagement provides a paradigmatic ideal of what that will look like, but we still need to understand the moving parts associated with such a change. This study proposes that democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs) serve as one part of the equation and fills an empirical gap to document the processes and roles of such partnerships as well as the means by which those processes and roles emerge and are enacted.
Overview of the Study

This introduction has provided a context for the study at hand. It has established the historical environment in which higher education has been called to claim its public purpose and relates the frameworks that inform the content of the study: democratic engagement and reciprocal determinism.

Chapter two delivers an overview of literature relevant to community-university partnerships. Though narrow, the literatures selected for the review are specific to the phenomena of higher education’s engagement with communities and community-university partnerships. Though there are many forms of engagement within sociological and psychological literatures, the type of interest to this study is that in which “institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) [interact] for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39). Similarly, though there are many forms of partnerships (public-private, corporate alliances, social sector coalitions), the form of interest to this study is that which occurs between institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities defined and bound as ongoing relationships (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007).

The review will begin with a section on the distinctions between community outreach and community engagement. This will echo the evolution from one-way university outreach through community and civic engagement as portrayed in the works used to historically situate the study within this chapter. Next is a comparison of technocratic and democratic engagement paradigms, which includes an historical
illustration of the role of technocracy within higher education. The third section presents literature that investigates concepts central to community-university engagement: networks and social capital, collaboration, and community-university partnerships. The fourth section provides an overview of the status of community-university partnership research including definitions, promising practices, and transformative potential. The fifth section presents a more detailed description of democratically engaged partnerships and the chapter concludes with a sixth section that identifies the gaps within the literature review that are addressed through the present study.

Chapter Three presents the method pursued by this study to test the explanatory proposition and answer the research questions. The study is a qualitative explanatory case study that investigated one case of community-university partnership, in which a democratic orientation was demonstrated. Evidence of the democratic processes and roles exhibited and enacted within the partnership, as well as the influences of external conditions, partnership learning interactions, and individual stakeholder attributes, was collected through interviews, observations, and document review. These data were thematically analyzed in two phases using provisional and in vivo coding. Comparing the data to the aforementioned influences and looking for patterns throughout the case generated meaning that informed the findings described in chapter four.

Chapter Four presents the study’s findings by research question and uses illustrative quotes to help the reader understand the themes and patterns identified during analysis. The chapter closes with a summary of the findings most poignant given the explanatory proposition and research questions of central interest to the study.
Chapter Five offers a discussion of the findings of the study, refinement of the explanatory proposition, implications for future research, limitations of the study, and implications for practice. Specifically, the discussion ranges from a general recapitulation of findings to a more in-depth consideration of the role of technocratic activities have within a democratic paradigm, the unexpected and prominent influence of leadership on the case’s democratic orientation, the influence of timing (or phase within a partnership’s lifetime) on a democratic orientation, the potential contributions of organizational culture theory and partnership identity theory to further explain the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships, the influence of efficiency on the democratic orientation of the partnership, the role of socialization and induction on the adoption of a democratic paradigm, and the relationship between social involvement and development of a personal democratic orientation.

Definitions

The terms that follow have multiple definitions and this list provides those definitions that are used throughout this study.

**Civic engagement.** “Often used as an umbrella term, connoting any campus-based activity that connects with or relates to something – issues, problems, organizations, schools, governments – outside the campus” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

**Collaboration.** “an interactive process among individuals and organizations with diverse expertise and resources, joining together to devise and execute plans for common goals as well as to generate solutions for complex problems.” (Gronski & Pigg, 2000, p. 783)
**Community engagement.** “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39)

**Community-University partnerships.** “ongoing, long-term relationships in which each partner brings individual goals, needs, assets and strategies, and through collaborative processes blends them into common goals and outcomes.” (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007)

**Community.** “a collection of people who share similar interests and involves the strength of attachment.” This definition of community extends to geographic or social interests, and the actions of a community center around “working for similar purposes to achieve common goals.” (Messer & Kecskes, 2008, p. 194)

**Democratic engagement.** “inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which academics share knowledge-generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving.” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 9)

**Democratically engaged partnerships.** partnerships (as defined by the Carnegie Foundation) that embody the roles, processes, and purposes of democratic engagement (as defined by Jameson et al., 2011; Kellogg Commission, 1998; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

**Explanatory proposition.** A statement used within an explanatory case study design to associate the factors that are in relation with one another. This relationship is tested through the explanatory case, and the proposition is refined and tested again.
Revisions and testing occur until the proposition cannot be refined any further (Fisher & Ziviani, 2004).

**Organizational culture.** Depends on a group having a common history and membership and is “…what a group learns over a period of time as that group soles its problems of survival in an external environment and its problems of internal integration…it is displayed through a) observable artifacts, b) values, and c) basic underlying assumptions” (Schein, 1990, p. 111).

**Outreach.** “the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community” (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007).

**Partnership identity.** “…tentatively defined as a cognitive state in which boundary-spanners…come to identify themselves and their partners as members of a partnership, an organizational entity which may have its own distinct and enduring missions, values, and norms” (Janke, 2008, p. 70).

**Publicness.** An intentional orientation that is civic, inclusive, and pragmatic. The people who orient their work and collaboration toward publicness want to form shared community or create a shared public (D. Barker, 2004).

**Reciprocal determinism.** Bandura’s social cognitive theory that “embraces an interactional model of causation in which environmental events, personal factors, and behavior all operate as interacting determinants of each other” (1986, p. xi).

**Social capital.** Social capital is comprised of “resources embedded in one’s social networks, resources that can be accessed or mobilized through ties in the networks” (Lin, 2000; 2008, p. 51; Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001).
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

“Verbalizing the importance of public-private partnerships, collaborative, holistic strategies, and university outreach initiatives has become fashionable. How to create, design, and sustain these initiatives successfully, however is not well understood” (Mayfield & Lucas, 2000, p. 165). Embedded within this brief and poignant quote are notions of partnerships, collaborations, outreach, engagement strategies, measures of success, elements of sustainability, and call for further study. Each piece of this, taken in its own consideration, informs the structure for this literature review.

The purpose of this literature review is to explore four bodies of literature that frame my study: a) outreach and engagement; b) democratic and technocratic orientations of engagement; c) the building blocks of community-university engagement; and e) community-university partnership research. I conclude with a fifth section that applies community-university partnership research to the framework of democratic engagement to describe the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships and a sixth section that delves into the gaps observed in this literature review. See Figure 3 for a map of this literature review.

First, I review literature that supports the practice of community-university engagement, delineates and defines its forms and activities, and calls for coherency among the various strategies and activities available. In the second section I review the democratic and technocratic orientations of engagement and their associated elements. In the third section, I review literature that addresses the essential elements of community-university engagement: networks and their resulting social capital, collaboration, and
partnerships. In the fourth section, I review literature that encompasses research on community-university partnerships as it is relevant to democratic engagement including the status of community-university partnership research, various frameworks and studies that address the efficacy and sustainability of partnership, the redress of uneven power, and transformation as an intentional purpose of engagement. The chapter concludes by describing democratically engaged partnerships through their roles, processes, and purposes. The conclusion of the literature review highlights the knowledge gap that is present within engagement and democratically engaged partnerships: there is no available explanation of how community and university stakeholders arrive at such democratically oriented roles and processes.
My study will address this gap by answering the following questions:

- **Research Question #1**: How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?

- **Research Question #2**: How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

- **Research Question #3**: How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

- **Research Question #4**: How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

**Engagement and Outreach**

The interactions and partnerships between institutions of higher education (IHE’s) and communities are complex and, in many regards, lacking coherence. Most of the literature on the dynamics that exist between IHE’s and communities is written from the viewpoint of the university that initiates, maintains, and leads the engagement. There is a dearth of studies to elucidate the perspective of the community (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Stoecker & Tryon, 2009). Jackson & Meyers (2000) conclude that, “large institutions are frequently viewed by individuals and small organizations as resource-rich, powerful, nonresponsive, and potentially overwhelming partners” (p. 134). According to Enos and Morton (2003), communities may see IHE’s using their resources to pursue interests that lie outside the realm of local needs, which often leads them to question the true level of
engagement that an IHE has with the community. On the other hand, IHE leaders may believe that the institution is making significant outreach efforts through service-learning and volunteerism, community-serving projects, openness to having the public at university events, and other community-related activities (Enos & Morton, 2003).

These disparate perceptions of IHE-community roles and relations are a result of the difference in the definition and comprehension of who comprises community. Enos & Morton (2003) write about two incongruous ways of looking at IHE-community partnerships. One separates the two entities, placing the IHE external to the community as the IHE charitably addresses needs for the community. The other is a view of the community as inclusive of the IHE as they work together toward shared pursuits (2003).

The following overview of the delineation between outreach and engagement details the shortcomings of unidirectional outreach, a trend toward more collaborative engagement, the need to attend to civic aims of such collaboration, and the failure to fully accomplish these goals.

**Delineations of outreach and engagement.** Higher education seeks to understand how to collaborate with various communities to address the issues that are most concerning to society. As a result, IHE’s commit a considerable amount of time and resources to working with local communities. IHE’s create entire positions, such as directors of partnership centers, directors of neighborhood relations, and vice provosts for outreach and engagement (Jacoby, 2003). The portfolio of activities typically within these efforts includes service-learning (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1998); volunteerism; civic engagement (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009); community-based or participatory
forms of research (Greenwood, Whyte, & Harkavy, 1993; Meredith Minkler, 2005; Nyden, 2003); and broad forms of partnerships and resource sharing (Rubin, 2000; The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007).

Although these resources and activities can be used in concert to move forward collaborative agendas for change, the normative approach that IHE’s have taken often results in piecemeal implementation. The normative approach is most aptly characterized as “the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community” (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007). Outreach is an individually oriented approach: a caring person or institution charitably cares for the needy (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009). This approach separates universities from communities, viewing community as the other (Enos & Morton, 2003), and is what Yapa observes (in Enos & Morton, 2003) as an assignment of the problem domain to community and solution domain to university. In this frame, outreach is unidirectional and is service-driven: “universities are seen – and tend to see themselves – as creators, repositories, and distributors of knowledge, and communities are seen as being in need of that knowledge” (Farber & Armaline, 1998, p. 75).

Underlying this unidirectional, charitable stance is that change can be accomplished through a single-disciplinary expert mode of intervention (Amey, Brown, & Sandmann, 2002). A case study of the University of Illinois illustrates a progression from such a unidirectional stance to a more participatory approach (Sorensen, Reardon, & Klump, 2003). Sorensen et al. describe a service-learning course over a nine-year time period from the perspective of three faculty members who taught it. Through their
reflection on the origins and development of the course, the case portrays the evolution from a “professional-expert” (p. 194) context to a more participatory planning process. Of particular relevance here are the beginning stages of the case, the result of which bred significant community distrust of the University. Beginning in 1987, the Illinois Higher Education Finance Committee chairwoman placed pressure on the then president of the University of Illinois to mobilize the University’s teaching, research, and outreach activities within the East St. Louis community. In response, the University allocated $100,000 to incentivize and support student and faculty research engagement in the community’s environmental, economic, and social challenges. Over the next three years, a significant number of reports, planning efforts, and studies were conducted. According to the authors, faculty considered themselves experts and were the ones who identified the issues to be studied and the methods used for study. Unfortunately, community members disengaged, feeling overly researched and used:

From the residents’ perspective, university researchers were similar to those they called “ambulance chasers,” who used distressing consensus data to justify public and private research grants that provided significant resources to their institution but few, if any, benefits to the East St. Louis residents whose lives and communities were being studied… ‘The last thing East St. Louis needs is another university professor who looks just like you, telling us what any sixth grader in town already knows, and having the gall to charge us $100,000 in state funds for the privilege.’” (p.194)

A change occurred within the leadership of the East St. Louis initiative and a more participatory approach took root, beginning with what was called the Ceola
Accords, a short list of principles by which the community and University would work together. These principles provided the opportunity for projects, partnerships, and classes to reorganize themselves in more mutually beneficial and collaborative ways.

The University of Illinois case (Sorensen et al., 2003) provides a thumb-nail sketch of some of the reasons for the trend toward more engaged models of collaboration. In light of the inherent shortcomings of unidirectional, separatist, and charity-driven models of IHE-community partnerships, an emphasis has been placed on moving toward community engagement models of partnership, a more mutually beneficial and collaborative interaction between communities and universities.

According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, community engagement is “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39). The language used here illuminates the dichotomy that exists between outreach and engagement (Draxler, 2009; MacKinnon-Lewis & Frabutt, 2001); whereas outreach is unidirectional and activity-based, engagement is bi-directional and partnership-based. A limitation, however, is that while engagement may create participatory and collaborative relationships, it does not necessarily attend to the democratic or civic elements of social change.

Take one example: service-learning, though rooted in the values of reciprocity, co-creation, and mutuality (Stanton et al., 1999) is probably most often critiqued in the community engagement literature for lacking a political or civic dimension. Rather, service-learning is often seen as emblematic of IHE’s gestures toward engagement, but
can often be a symbolic and apolitical attempt (Dzur, 2010; Harkavy, 2003). Hartley (2011) describes service-learning as having originated as a project of transformation but evolved to become a pedagogy in service to the academic disciplines.

There is an increasing demand that attention be paid to the ways and means of civic engagement in IHE’s. Associations such as Campus Compact, the American Association of Colleges and Universities, and the Presidents’ Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education have recognized the need for true civic engagement within service-learning and beyond. Civic engagement clarifies the goal of community engagement and expands upon the notion of individuals working to improve the quality of community life (R. Putnam, 1995) to include institutions of higher education (Ehrlich, 2000).

As explained within this short review, the community engagement field has begun to parse the differences between outreach, community engagement, and civic engagement and to place more emphasis on collaborative, two-way engagement (Kellogg Commission, 1998; MacKinnon-Lewis & Frabutt, 2001; The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007). This progression toward civic engagement has been a result of an increasing awareness of the distance that unidirectional charity creates between IHE’s and the community. There has been recognition of the necessity of civic elements within social change as called for by landmark declarations such as President’s Declaration of the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education (Ehrlich & Hollander, 1998), the Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University (Boyte & Hollander, 1999), and the Wingspread Report on whether higher education is ready for engagement (Brukardt et al., 2004)
Forms of outreach and engagement can be born of various value sets of service, participation, collaboration, civic, and democratic participation, yet can easily become variations of rhetoric on the same thing: a status quo means of charitably addressing community deficits through disparate activities. Some say we have adapted the activities of community and civic engagement, such as service-learning, to the culture and dominant epistemology of the academy (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999), rather than adapt academe to accomplish its part in the improvement of community life (R. Putnam, 1995) or to foster a public culture of democracy (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

In response, the Kellogg Commission issued *Returning to our Roots: The Engaged Institution*.

It is time to go beyond outreach and service to what the Kellogg Commission defines as “engagement”. By engagement, we refer to institutions that have redesigned their teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetically and productively involved with their communities, however community may be defined.

Engagement goes well beyond extension, conventional outreach, and even most conceptions of public service. Inherited concepts emphasize a one-way process in which the university transfers its expertise to key constituents. Embedded in the engagement ideal is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity. By engagement the Commission envisions partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table. An institution that responds to these imperatives can properly be called what the
Kellogg Commission has come to think of as an “engaged institution.” (Kellogg Commission, 1998, p. 9)

The report establishes that engagement is comprised of, yet transcends, activities such as service-learning, outreach, and community-university partnerships. Stressing the need for coordination and coherency, the report encourages institutions to build their capacity for organizing knowledge around public problems, align the use of disparate activities to feed the efforts of larger public agendas, and situate these efforts in community-university partnerships (Kellogg Commission, 1998).

**Beyond Kellogg: struggling with coherency.** In the 14 years since the Kellogg Report, IHE’s have continued to struggle to adapt structures, processes, and roles to move toward a model of interaction with community that embraces highly participatory, democratic, coordinated, and cohesive forms of engagement. As Ira Harkavy expresses it, “…simply put, engaging the entire range of a college or university’s resources to help create democratic neighborly communities requires lots of hard thinking, doing, reflecting, learning, and relearning” (2003, p. xiv).

David Mathews, executive director of the Kettering Foundation, has claimed that the real challenge for higher education is to not let the engagement movement stall (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009). Similarly, the participants of a recent Wingspread gathering on institutionalizing engagement within higher education noted that higher education may not be ready to move from its normative implementation of outreach to forms of engagement (Brukardt et al., 2004). In the spring of 2004, the Johnson Foundation funded the assembly of more than 40 leaders of engaged higher education institutions to discuss the status and progress of community-university engagement. The
group recognized that in spite of calls for civically-engaged collaborations with communities, an abundance of evidence that engagement benefits higher education and its communities, and a plethora of models for how universities can engage their communities, the majority of institutions had not embraced engagement. The participants concluded that engagement is difficult and that it is significantly impeded by the traditional structures of higher education.

The root of this issue is that we continue to insist on implementing a menu of activities in a particular place or location (the community) instead of seeking out the larger democratic processes and purposes of community-university engagement (Hollander & Hartley, 2009; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Without a democratic purpose, engagement efforts are often pursued as ends in themselves, and engagement becomes reduced to a public relations function of making known what the campus is doing for the community and providing opportunities for students to have experiences in the community. (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 6)

Saltmarsh et al. advocate for a process that underscores that which is outlined in the Kellogg report: an emphasis on reciprocal knowledge-producing relationships. They go on to clarify the result of such reciprocity: a second-order change that transforms epistemology, scholarship, and pedagogy. The larger purposes they advocate are the amelioration of public problems and the creation of a more democratic society. The two purposes, in combination, are critical to moving the engagement agenda forward. If higher education only focuses on the production and dissemination of knowledge while
ignoring the vitality of civic life, it has failed in reclaiming its public mission (Dzur, 2010).

**Democratic and Technocratic Engagement**

…Education is the making of the future. Its role in a democratic society is that of critic and leader as well as servant; its task is not merely to meet the demands of the present but to alter those demands if necessary, so as to keep them always suited to democratic ideals. Perhaps its most important role is to serve as an instrument of social transition, and its responsibilities are defined in terms of the kind of civilization society hopes to build. (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947)

Higher education’s two-fold purpose of ameliorating public problems and fostering a democratic society has at its roots a form of democracy that is Deweyan. In this context, democracy does not refer to a system of legislation, but to a way of living that promotes our ability to understand the impact of our activities; to interact with diverse people and experiences; and to have the capacity to work toward the Common Good (Benson, Harkavy, & Puckett, 2007; Cummings, 2000; Dewey, 1916).

A democratic society can be defined as “a society which makes provisions for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life (Dewey, 1916, p. 99).” Within this conception of democracy, people consciously share many different interests and there is free and varied interaction between social groups (Dewey, 1916; Thayer- Bacon, 2004). In contrast, when a dualistic philosophy is employed, there is further separation between classes of society, a disruption to
interaction that promotes individualism over association. This disruption serves the needs of those in power and those with privilege; it arranges exclusion of those without power and privilege. Deliberate democracy is not the cause of the “widening of the area of shared concerns... [and the]... liberation of a greater diversity of personal capacities (p. 87),” but exists as a result of these conditions. It exists to sustain these conditions. From these shared concerns and contact comes the need for new social environments, created through social reconstruction. We must educate for deliberate democracy so that people have “personal initiative and adaptability” (p.88), lest they become overwhelmed and blinded to the possibilities for reconstruction.

Reconstruction is worked toward as different social groups are in contact with one another and as the process of the individuals of those groups have their unique capacities nurtured and trained to be used for social aims (Dewey, 1916). A democratic society will seek “deliberate and systematic education” (p. 87) because it strives for intersecting and varied social interests and seeks progress. Combined, these elements allow for shared social aims to provide informal social control and greater contact between divergent social groups. According to Dewey, any community or society must have members, albeit divergent, that share common goals, beliefs, and knowledge. More specifically, a community must be comprised of participants who recognize a common end and gear their activities to that common end. Constant reconstruction is needed to accommodate the new social environments produced by such varied contact and such shared pursuits to common ends. These ideals of democracy, as portrayed by Dewey, provide a basic framework for democratic engagement. The values that underlie this pursuit are diversity, equality, cooperation, justice, and a belief in the commonwealth (Boyte, 2009).
While the fabric of American society and culture is woven with the threads of democracy, there is also an entwined investment in technocracy. The influences of such an investment are seen in the functions and roles of many sectors of society, including the engagement efforts of IHEs. The following section provides an overview of the historical development of technocracy and its effects on higher education, discusses how the framework of democratic engagement stands apart from the paradigm of technocracy, and compares and contrasts the elements of democratic and technocratic engagement.

**Technocracy and professionalism.** Technocracy in the United States dates back to the early 1930’s when technical experts began to set a social agenda in the wake of the Great Depression. Technocratic ideology places authority for knowledge generation and the organization of society solely in the hands of experts. As a political orientation, technocracy negates citizen authority by dismantling the system of representative democracy (Akin, 1977). As a social practice, it takes social responsibility from the citizen’s sphere and places it with professionals who are specially trained to provide social programs, community building, and other civic tasks. As an influence on higher education, technocracy promotes narrow areas of disciplinary specialization (Krimsky, 1984).

Mathews (1996) describes how technocracy grew from the professionalism that occurred in the first half of the 20th century when the economic crises of the times led to public revolts in 1890 and 1930. The public’s desire for better living conditions was answered by Populists, who were thought of as the everyman or the neighbor who took on the civic mantel, ran for office, and promised to improve living conditions through government intervention. Eventually, whether it was through misgovernance or as a
result of oppositionists trying to limit Populist power, corruption spread through the
government. In response, a new genre of political leadership emerged from prominent
families and business people. These new leaders were deemed Progressives and
positioned themselves as caretakers of the citizenry. They endorsed and utilized
professional expertise and scientific and objective governance that worked on behalf of
the public (1996). This launched a professionalized culture that pervaded politics and the
social arenas. No longer were citizens seen as equipped with the necessary expertise to
address the problems affecting them. Professional experts who had specialized
knowledge were looked to for answers to scientific, social, and political problems. This
scientific form of politics was one expression of professionalism and technocracy, but the
practices were much more widespread (1996).

According to Krimsky (1984), attraction to expertise has occurred in all
civilizations: for example, through reverence for shamans, master builders, and scientists.
Higher education was borne of a desire to generate knowledge and build expertise and
followed the trend of professionalism by concentrating on training its graduates to
undertake professional and caretaking roles and immersing them in technical languages
to which the public were not privy. A faith in professionalism inherently suggests that
the public is deficient and that scholarly professionals are able to fix society (Mathews,
1996).

Reliance on technocracy and professionalism are thought to be problematic in
three ways. a) The problems of society are not able to be solved solely through technical
interventions of a singular professional field (Gronski & Pigg, 2000), but rather require
multi-sector collaborations, as well as the application of first-hand life experiences. b)
Dependence on expert professionals diminishes citizen participation and reduces opportunities for use of the democratic process (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009; Dzur, 2004; Mathews, 1996). c) Finally, such reliance has created amongst the public a distrust of professionals and experts. In creating such a one-sided valuation of who has expertise and credibility, professionals and technocrats have grown distant from the publics they are meant to serve. In fact, some believe that society questions the legitimacy of professions that maintain such isolation (Dzur, 2004).

IHE’s have been shaped by the trend toward professionalism and technocracy. The result can be seen in the training of graduates in the tradition of technocracy as previously discussed, in the current reward system of the professoriate, in views of higher education as a private good (Hollander & Hartley, 2009; Mathews, 1996), and in the diminishment of democratic culture within institutions of higher education (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). Indeed, high reward is given for those scholarly works that maintain the technical vernacular of the discipline and are presented to the professional members of the discipline, while devalued are those works that are presented to members of the public for their application in local contexts. Society and often parents, in regarding the notion that higher education is a private good, believe that college is a job factory or a means to increase one’s own status. Alongside of these practices is the adoption of a technocratic governing culture, diminishing the democratic governance so necessary to establishing a democratic culture that serves as a role model and inspiration for seeking a more democratic purpose (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011).

Technocracy and professionalism have had a profound effect on the way that IHE’s approach engagement and the ways in which valid forms of knowledge are
conceptualized (Gronski & Pigg, 2000); the self-referential and uni-discipline interventions (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009); the reticence to align with, rather than contravene, public efforts to address problems (Mathews, 1996); a stance that the community is the domain of problems and deficits (Enos & Morton, 2003); and an overall loss of the higher democratic purposes of education (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011)

The Democratic Engagement Whitepaper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) claims that engagement that embodies these tendencies is normatively technocratic. For example, a university that seeks to enhance its national reputation for academic excellence and research productivity welcomes new presidential leadership. In addition to some significant academic reforms, this president calls for more engagement with the university’s local communities through applied research and service-learning. The university conducts a comprehensive needs assessment of one of its adjacent distressed communities and allocates significant resources to the development of applied research and service-learning administrative support. Faculty members are encouraged to identify within the needs assessment those areas that their disciplinary training and research skills can address. The service-learning office is tasked with developing a portfolio of community-based agencies that are willing to host students from service-learning classes. After some years, the university celebrates its engagement success. There have been a significant number of research projects that address community problems, faculty publications from those projects have been numerous, and more than 30 service-learning classes are offered in which students can work at more than 50 agencies to provide services such as tutoring, preparing income tax returns, serving meals, and creating green
spaces. The frequency of interactions with the community and the number of hours contributed in service to the community is significant.

A more democratic version of engagement would emphasize a participatory orientation, build civic skills, and employ reciprocal knowledge partnerships between communities and universities (Hartley, 2011; Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The myriad of activities to achieve these goals would be coordinated and strategically integrated (Hollander & Hartley, 2009). Had the new leadership proposed that the institution reclaim its democratic purpose, the engagement efforts would have looked very different. It would require more than redesigning programs. It would require rethinking the whole enterprise through which the relationship between the institution, local communities, citizens, and the epistemological interventions was reorganized in such a fashion to collaboratively address public problems and bring about a deeper democratic practice within the community to leverage change. There would be observable challenge and change within the institution’s core practices, including faculty rewards, evaluation of who is teacher and learner, who is co-participant in knowledge generation, where knowledge comes from, and the role of the institution in promoting democratic processes (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011).

A framework is laid out in the Democratic Engagement White Paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) that addresses both the stalled state of engagement discussed in the previous section and the influence of technocracy and professionalism discussed in this section. When the norms, processes, and purposes of democratic culture are applied to civic engagement, “democratic engagement” is created (p. 6). Such a framework of democratic engagement stands in stark contrast to technocratic engagement or what is considered the
normative approach to outreach, an approach that has been observed in IHE’s and has stalled engagement.

The remainder of this section will compare and contrast five areas of democratic and technocratic engagement: a) inclusivity or normative group composition; b) reciprocity or mutuality; c) asset or deficit orientations; d) epistemological stance; and e) political orientation.

**Inclusive or normative group composition.** The framework of democratic engagement champions an inclusive stance, one that seeks to include non-academics in what were previously viewed as academic tasks (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The normative (technocratic) stance is that tasks are done by academic experts for community clients (Cox, 2000). In his introduction to a special edition of Cityscapes that examined the Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program, Cox outlined a framework to explain the community factors that affected the range and impact of diverse community-university partnerships. The development of his framework was guided by three key questions a) What types of activities or programs are implemented to improve neighborhoods? b) Who are the parties involved in or affected by those activities? c) What are the individual interests of those parties in the community improvement activities? The answers to these questions were gathered from the myriad of COPCs funded by HUD prior to 2000 and especially those that were described within the special issue journal. In answering them, Cox put forward six dimensions of community that hold sway with partnership efforts: 1) human capital, 2) social capital, 3) physical infrastructure, 4) economic infrastructure, 5) institutional infrastructure, and 6) political strength. Within this work, Cox acknowledges that there is an in- and out-group
delineation made between academics who undertake tasks and community stakeholders who receive the fruits of academic labor. This dichotomy creates distance between university producers and community consumers of knowledge (Jameson et al., 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Task-sharing is at the heart of democracy, and a core element of democratic practice is collective decision-making (Dzur, 2004). The practice of sharing work and making it public necessitates democratic participation. The notion of making work public is captured in what Mathews (1996) defines as publicness, a relationship characteristic that is open, civic, inclusive, and pragmatic. Publicness is an intentional orientation. The people who orient their work and collaboration toward publicness want to form shared community or create a shared public.

Publicness entails a complexity of the diversity represented in the relationship. In addition to the socioeconomic, cultural and racial diversity present in communities and universities, there also exists a degree of ideological diversity within the communities and IHE’s (Reardon, 2000). Ideological diversity is to be expected when bringing together stakeholders from various sectors. Democratic engagement embraces this diversity and uses it to enliven the democratic practice of associated living (Dewey, 1916). As Boyte and Kari summarize, “Public work of significance…has been the way diverse people have forged connections with each other and addressed the nation’s problems” (2000, p. 44).

The inclusivity and diversity that are hallmarks of democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) allow for public work that transcends the expert practice of applying a single disciplinary lens to a problem. Technocratic engagement, on the other
hand, depends upon narrow specialization of expertise. Though technocracy is not inherently socially exclusive, the reliance on specialization can be a barrier to including diverse perspectives in problem solving processes. Inclusion of diverse stakeholders necessitates acknowledging the decisions, norms, and structures that prevent full participation and makes it imperative to negotiate those factors that produce inclusionary practices. In these ways, diversity and democratic engagement are linked (Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011). Though it seeks participation from student and community stakeholders, technocratic engagement privileges faculty expertise and adopts a hierarchical model of collaboration in which the faculty expert is at the top of the credentials pyramid (Jameson et al., 2011). A hierarchical model such as this leads to transactional or instrumental outcomes (Kecskes, 2006) which limit the potential for transformation of the issues being addressed or the parties addressing them. This notion of transformation is central to the framework of democratic engagement and is a byproduct of reciprocal practice (Jameson et al., 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

**Reciprocity or mutuality.** Within community-university engagement literature, reciprocity and mutuality are highly conflated. Mutuality, the actions that yield mutual benefit, is often used as a measure of success or a benchmark within engagement, collaboration, and partnerships (D. E. Austin, 2004; Bringle et al., 2009; Community Campus Partnerships for Health, 2006; Hamel-Lambert, 2010; Holland, 2005; S. R. Jones, 2003; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Points of Light Foundation, 2001; Torres & Schaffer, 2000; Viewel, Gaffikin, & Morrissey, 2000). Mutuality is also cited as the defining characteristic, or one of the few defining characteristics, of engagement

Within the field of social work and community organizing, Mizrahi and Rosenthal’s (1994) work on developing strategic partnerships is considered a seminal how-to manual. The authors embrace a position that engagement should employ the spirit of mutuality, which can provide organizations and stakeholders an environment in which they work together, yet garner separate and autonomous benefits (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1994). However, engagement that is framed in a democratic orientation can lead to mutual transformation, not just mutual benefit (Jameson et al., 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

In framing the concept of mutually transformative partnerships, Jameson and her colleagues (2011) suggest that reciprocity extends beyond mutual benefit to encompass “mutual change and growth” (p. 262). They believe the use of the term reciprocity to mean mutual benefit is but a thin definition. A thicker, more democratic interpretation of reciprocity acknowledges that it produces inherent challenges to the normative structures of engagement that necessitate institutional and community change (MacKinnon-Lewis & Frabutt, 2001). MacKinnon-Lewis & Frabutt’s description of a long-term community-university partnership located at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro outlines this as one of the elements of effective collaboration. The partnership, also known at the High Point Initiative, had multiple aspects including a neighborhood outreach center and youth programming that promoted GED acquisition, violence prevention, and job skills training. The authors conclude that elements of effective collaboration include that the development of trusting, mutually beneficial relationships, enhancement of community
capacity to continue work beyond the university’s involvement, and enhancement of the institutions core functions (teaching and research) through community engaged scholarship were key to effective collaboration with communities.

Within the Community Outreach Partnership Center literature (literature arising from the governmentally funded initiative to establish community partner centers on university campuses), Cox (2000) delves further into this thick definition of reciprocity, noting that in addition to campuses assisting communities and communities assisting campuses, reciprocity denotes communities informing campuses and campuses informing communities. He later concludes that the practice of informing one another leads to the “fundamental reshape of institutions of higher education and the role they play in society” (p. 17).

Jones (2003) proposes that reciprocity dictates a desire and possibility for equality within the relationships between campus and community. This requires an equitable distribution of resources among the collaborators. Drawing upon profiles of five successful community-university partnerships she gathered from soliciting the higher education list serve and a review of community-university partnership literature, Jones developed a list of principles for working with partner agencies. These principles include development over time; existence of a close match between the institution and agency’s mission, activities, and timelines; attention to power dynamics, continual communication, acknowledging expertise; and emphasis on evaluation and assessment.

Kari and Skelton (in D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009) suggest that reciprocity enables trust within the stakeholders’ relationships. The elements of equality and trust insinuate the presence of respect.
The thick definition of reciprocity includes elements of equality and trust, both of which rest on the presence of respect, that result in community stakeholders and campus stakeholders informing the public work of the collaboration. A democratic orientation suggests that the normative understanding of cooperation, based on mutuality, be surpassed and that democratic engagement embraces collaboration, which is based on reciprocity. Such democratic interpretation of reciprocity (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) is present in both the work on mutually transformative partnerships (Jameson et al., 2011) and the Kellogg Commission’s definition of partnerships (Kellogg Commission, 1998).

**Asset or deficit orientations.** "Communities should not be viewed as a set of needs and deficiencies while overlooking their gifts and capacities" (El Ansari, Phillips, & Zwi, 2002, p. 156). The normative, technocratic approach to engagement seeks to address community needs with academic expertise and manpower. The democratic approach to engagement recognizes that all participants have the potential to bring expertise to the collaborative work, including local community stakeholders (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

Common characterization of the deficit orientation of engagement includes the portrayal of community as domains of problems (Enos & Morton, 2003), laboratories (Nyden, 2003), and clients or customers (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009; Jameson et al., 2011). In the deficit orientation of engagement, the primary role of community is to identify and make known their needs (Amey et al., 2002; MacKinnon-Lewis & Frabutt, 2001) and to provide locations for well-researched solutions proffered by the university (Farber & Armaline, 1998).
Technocratic engagement is rooted in a deficit-based paradigm in that it seeks to fix communities (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Communities can also embrace this paradigm when, for instance, community leaders broadcast their community’s devastating needs in order to attract additional resources. As external resources are leveraged to address the challenges of the community, the existing internal resources are devalued (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

In contrast to the deficit-based perspective, an assets-based approach recognizes and draws upon the assets of a community (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), amplifying existing community resources and capacities (Sharpe, Greaney, Lee, & Royce, 2000). The deficit perspective can be both observed in the interactions of universities and communities and heard in the language used to describe the community (Jameson et al., 2011). Therefore, indications of movement from deficient-orientation to an assets-based approach include significant changes in the modes of interactions as well as the dialect of engagement.

True democratic engagement utilizes assets-based perspectives and invites all parties to contribute their resources and capacities to the production and discovery of knowledge that addresses public problems. Community and economic development programs, in both the United States and international contexts, have recognized the deleterious effect that a deficit perspective can have on communities and have developed a model known as asset-based community development in which the tension between asset- and deficit-driven action is explored and described (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).
In their review of asset-based community development (ABCD), Mathie and Cunningham (2003) describe ABCD as a counter innovation to a needs-based view of urban development:

In the needs-based approach, well-intentioned efforts of universities, donor agencies, and governments have generated needs surveys, analysed problems, and identified solutions to meet those needs. In the process, however, they have inadvertently presented a one-sided negative view, which has often compromised, rather than contributed to, community capacity building. (p. 475)

They outline four elements of asset-based community development, which include the use of appreciative inquiry to structure shared meaning around goals and opportunities, valuing networks and associations as assets from which social capital is derived, focusing on economic development in terms of creating infrastructure as well as building individual economic capacity, and relocating power of decision-making to communities (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).

**Epistemological stance.** “Knowledge, quite simply, resides in many places, not just in the academy” (Harkavy, 2003, p. xv). Technocratic engagement may acknowledge Harkavy’s claim that knowledge resides in many places but holds fast to the belief that it is created and is most appropriately credentialed by the academy (D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009). Community members and leaders often have first-hand experience with public problems, as well as a contextual understanding, but most are typically de-valued if they do not have academic training or credentialed expertise (Shaffer in D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009). Generally, the academy most highly values knowledge that makes an original disciplinary contribution, yet so many complex public problems are not
When credentialed expertise is given sole responsibility for generating solutions to problems, technocratic decision-making occurs. Technocratic decision-making is best geared to “what is” within the scientific world rather than “what should be” in the social world (DeSario & Langton, 1984, p. 226). Scientific information is important but cannot be the sole factor when making decisions in the political and social worlds. Lay or local knowledge, non-academic knowledge (Boyte, 2009), folk wisdom (Krimsky, 1984), and aboriginal or indigenous knowledge (Haig-Brown & Dannenmann, 2000) are all forms of the valuable and viable knowledge that originates in the experience and expertise of community. Residents and stakeholders generate local knowledge. Non-academic knowledge, in its most indigenous form, includes spiritual and cultural insight, wisdom from elders, local knowledge, craft knowledge, and community common sense (Boyte, 2009).

In his work on collaborative action research, Nyden (2003) claims community knowledge cannot be separated from those who live its reality. It cannot be appropriated by what he calls “academic day laborers” (2003, p. 219). Nyden presents a case study of the Loyola University Chicago Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) in which he documents and describes the genesis of a research center that grew from a successful collaboration between community leaders and activist faculty. The prior effort was not a university-created program or center, but a collaborative effort to address urban policy issues. The Center it produced was well funded and resourced. It involves diverse
teams of stakeholders (including community members, agency staff, faculty, and students) in 20 or more projects at any given time.

When technicians appropriate local knowledge, they often reduce it in ways that fit with narrow theory-building processes. This oversimplification underestimates or, even worse, ignores the complexity of historical and social influences on the problem, resulting in a form of “epistemic violence” (Haig-Brown & Dannenmann, 2000, p. 5).

Theory and knowledge generated in the absence of community participation often yields products that are unusable by community stakeholders and unable to be applied successfully to local contexts (Nyden, 2003). Within a democratic approach, the measure of collaboratively generated or discovered knowledge is the extent to which it advances public ends (London, 2010). As Boyte (2009, p. 1) states, “community is the living context for evaluating expert knowledge.”

Integrating academic expert knowledge with community knowledge creates a “funds of knowledge” approach that values both forms and builds on experiential and theoretical contributions instead of replacing them with expert and credentialed ideas (Miller & Hafner, 2008, p. 90). This integration is referred to as a two-way approach to knowledge generation and is in contrast with a technocratic one-way application of expert academic knowledge to community problems (Ernest L. Boyer, 1996; Kellogg Commission, 1998; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Democratic engagement champions multiple-source knowledge and shared authority in the co-construction and discovery of knowledge (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010). It necessitates that responsibility and authority are shared (Jameson et al., 2011). The epistemological stance of democratic engagement requires that the discovery and production of knowledge be a
shared endeavor, including the definition of the problem to be addressed, the design and implementation of the means to address it, and the evaluation of the effort (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

This democratic approach is emerging in the context of what Boyte (2009, p. 1) calls a “knowledge war” in which technocrats who devalue community knowledge are unknowingly working in tandem with anti-intellectualists who devalue academic knowledge. This war is a barrier to collaborative work that addresses enduring public problems. The type of collaborative knowledge generation endorsed by democratic engagement does not privilege one type of knowledge as superior to the other (Nyden, 2003), nor does it unquestioningly endorse one form or another (Boyte in D. W. M. Barker & Brown, 2009). Building on the democratic traditions of deliberation and dialogue (Dewey, 1916; Mathews, 1996), local and expert knowledge can have a relationship that is built on contestation and collaboration – all sorts of knowledge are considered, tested, and evaluated.

To honor this process of collaboration and contestation, a democratic orientation democratizes the politics of knowledge. The capacity for civic agency of all parties is fostered, and spaces are created in which academic, non-academic, scientific, and community knowledge can mix (Boyte, 2009). In addition to space, whether figurative or literal, attention must also be paid to establishing protocols that ensure shared input on problem identification, design, and assessment (Haig-Brown & Dannenmann, 2000). At the heart of this epistemological shift is an authentic appreciation of one another’s skills, perspectives, and assets. As such, a shared and democratic approach means that there is a
power shift away from professional ownership and control of knowledge (El Ansari et al., 2002).

**Political orientation.** Engagement that is democratically-oriented is “intentionally political in that students learn about democracy by acting democratically… [in this sense] politics is understood through explicit awareness and experiencing patterns of power that are present in the relationship between the university and the community” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 11). Within the framework of democratic engagement, politics is not represented as partisan activities or advocacy activities, but rather as an explicit inclusion of attention to the dynamics of power and access. Within engagement relationships, there can be an imbalance of power. This imbalance often results in the party with the power being the ones to frame the problems and thus frame the potential range of solutions that will even be considered (Miller & Hafner, 2008).

The normative form of engagement is largely apolitical and ignores the prescient issue of power at play within university efforts to engage communities (Boyte & Hollander, 1999; Jameson et al., 2011). There is no examination of the motivations for community participation and the context in which the outreach is received. In a more democratic form of engagement, power imbalances are addressed through consensus building and negotiation (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008).

Further, democratic engagement calls for a reorientation of the culture in which an IHE operates. This very political stance requires that the institution embrace building a participatory democracy and addressing public problems as its primary purpose (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011).
Summary of democratic and technocratic orientations. The literature discussed here provides an overview of how appreciation of technocratic expertise in American society has given rise to technocratic decision making in the political and social arenas. American higher education has also embraced a technocratic culture, which has influenced its interpretation and enactment of engagement. One of the criticisms levied against higher education is that it has lost its greater purpose, that of democratic social renewal (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). Democratic purposes such as social change are political and social. It is therefore easily understood why adopting a technocratic culture that is best suited to scientific dilemmas (DeSario & Langton, 1984) dilutes the capacity to embrace a more democratic purpose.

In closing, a critique is offered of the way that higher education is being portrayed in some of the most emphatic democratic engagement writings. Within this literature, it would appear that all institutions of higher education, with the exception of a few, are so technocratically oriented that their engagement practices are incapable of a democratic orientation. Perhaps the range of stakeholders that comprise an institution of higher education problematizes this stance. Higher education faculty and students live in local communities and consider themselves members of those communities. They are affected by the issues at hand within their communities. Not all institutional types lend themselves to employing a workforce of faculty who are professional transplants. Some institutions of higher education rely on a faculty and study body that have been legitimate stakeholders of their communities for lengthy periods of time and posse the local and folk knowledges democratic engagement seeks to integrate. They often wear two hats when participating in community problem solving. Certainly, they bring their
professional identities with them, but not everyone in higher education comes from a discipline that fails to embrace the integration of practical knowledge.

This critique is contributed in the spirit of a general agreement with the seminal works that a democratic purpose for higher education is vital and that many instances of engagement between higher education and communities do not portray a democratic orientation. It is important to note that even in light of this, technical knowledge has the capability for generating spectacular solutions to our social and environmental problems. As Desario and Langton (1984) suggest, it is not the use of technical expertise that is problematic; it is the inattention we pay to the social means by which it is applied and the value system that necessitates citizen participation in decision-making. The next section of this literature review explores the building blocks of community-university engagement that exist outside of a technocratic or democratic examination.

Building Blocks of Engagement

Democratic engagement is built upon relationships that bring people together to collaboratively solve problems (Dewey, 1916; Harkavy & Hartley, 2008). "For organizations as well as individuals, responsibility follows from relationships. But relationships grow out of our purposes, just as how we relate to others helps to shape our aims" (Sullivan, 2000, p. 19). Thus, our goals of social and environmental change are intimately twined with relationships.

This section explores the concepts involved in relationships of public work that comprise the basic elements of universities working with communities. These concepts include networks that yield social capital, collaboration and the constitutive elements of partnerships, such as relationships, relationship competencies, and stakeholder capacity.
**Networks that yield social capital.** A powerful motivation for campuses and communities to work together is the awareness that an institution working in isolation is unlikely to achieve as much as those that network to maximize their resources, connections, time, knowledge, and skill (Messer & Kecskes, 2008). The resources leveraged through the social process of working together are known as social capital (Lin, 2008). Scholars have introduced the sociological concept of social capital to partnership research to explain the multiplier effect of community-campus and public-private partnerships (Calabrese, 2006; Farber & Armaline, 1998; Gronski & Pigg, 2000; Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Reich, 2000).

The resources found within social networks can be accessed and mobilized to produce a form of social capital. According to Lin, social capital is comprised of “resources embedded in one’s social networks, resources that can be accessed or mobilized through ties in the networks” (Lin, 2000; 2008, p. 51; Lin et al., 2001).

It is important to make the distinction between the terms “network” and “social capital” as the terms are not synonymous and should not be defined as one and the same. In her network theory of social capital, Lin (2008) establishes that networks are the portals to the social capital, which are embedded in the members’ resources and accessed through the members’ ties to associations and other networks.

A greater diversity within the members of the network can allow for a greater number of assets and actions to be tapped, thus diversity amongst the network members is to be encouraged whether the diversity is in its people, organizations or both (Calabrese, 2006). Calabrese developed a case study of a school – university partnership located in the Midwest in which the frameworks of mutuality, social capital, and
appreciative inquiry were employed. The partnership was largely enacted through relationships between a doctoral action research team and the teachers and administrators of a high school. Overall, examination of the case illustrates that using an appreciative inquiry frame orientation when beginning a partnership can enhance mutuality between partners and the development of diversity within the partnership.

A network of connections is not guaranteed, but rather a “product of endless effort at institution” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 52). Bourdieu describes the goal of institution as the transformation of contingent relationships into durable ones that are useful, necessary and elective, as well as able to ensure meaningful obligations or institutionally granted rights.

A number of variables affect the amount of social capital available to the network, including bridges, strength of ties between members, structural holes, density or openness, and the very size of the network (Lin, 2008). In her Cooley-Mead Award address (an award for lifetime contributions to sociological social psychology) Cook (2005) adds trust as a variable, although she raises the question of whether trust is a form of social capital or, in fact, a result of social capital. In networks and associations in which strangers come to depend upon one another, reciprocity enables people to build trust. The network, or the association, is what provides the social capital that makes it possible for trust to be built between the parties. Trust is particularly important in relationships in which there is a power imbalance. Accordingly, no single person within a network can be the source of the social capital necessary for trust, but rather the existence of the network is what makes it possible.

Coleman (1988) lists three types of social capital: a) obligations and expectations, which hinge on the social environment having enough trust between parties to allow for
the free exchange of obligations and expectations, b) information flow, which is made possible by the capacity of the social structure, and c) norms, which are defined in conjunction with sanctions. Each type of social capital yields returns for the networks that possess them. These returns are classified into two categories. Instrumental returns, which include wealth, power, and reputation, are sometimes referred to as bridging capital. Expressive returns, which include group cohesion, solidarity, and well being, are sometimes considered bonding capital (Lin, 2008). The degree to which networks are closed may enhance the expressive returns such as trust and solidarity, but openness and permeability allow for greater access to instrumental returns such as information and resources (Lin, 2008). These characterizations are not mutually exclusive.

In his historical survey of the decline of social capital in America since the 1950’s, Putnam (1995) explains how social capital can help to explain why civic engagement and social connectedness improve the quality of community life. Through networks, we garner additional access to information and resources that advance our standing. In having such networks, particularly those that promote engagement, norms of reciprocity and trust are built. Reciprocity and trust are what yield organization and communication, establish positive reputations for those involved, and enable collective action to address public problems (1995). The process of the collective action that is enabled through social capital can be characterized as collaboration, a concept explored in great detail in human services and social sector literature.

**Collaboration.** Just as the paradigms that inform engagement have differing emphasis on mutuality, reciprocity, and shared authority, so do the definitions of collaboration. In most instances, collaboration is seen as a way of combining effort
between two or more parties to achieve mutual benefit. For instance, Mackinnon-Lewis and Frabutt (2001) define collaboration as a “process that leads to the attainment of goals that cannot be achieved effectively by any one agent...[and is] often mutually beneficial to all parties involved.” (p. 66). Similarly, Mattesich, Murray-Close, and Monsey (2001) write that “Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to meet common goals” (p. 7). The researchers emphasize that the members of a collaboration must jointly decide on the definition of the relationship, goals, responsibilities, authority, and accountability. Joint decision-making differentiates collaboration from participation. This process and the shared responsibility that it embraces address the power and control issues of delineations of participation that were discussed in the previous section.

With regard to democratic engagement, the type of collaboration described in the Democratic Engagement White Paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) appears more akin to the type of reciprocal collaboration described by Gronski and Pigg (2000): “an interactive process among individuals and organizations with diverse expertise and resources, joining together to devise and execute plans for common goals as well as to generate solutions for complex problems” (p. 783). The collaborative process outlined in the Democratic Engagement White Paper yields a reciprocal approach to framing problems, choosing the means to address resultant issues, and assessing the outcomes of the solutions that were enacted. The orientation of democratic engagement toward reciprocity affords the layperson the opportunity to move from consumer to co-participant in the knowledge production process.
In an attempt to add clarity to the understanding of collaboration, Mattessich et al. (2001) conducted a literature review to investigate the factors that influence the success of collaboration. The study was funded by the Wilder Foundation and the social sector has accepted the review as a seminal work on collaboration. The bodies of literature reviewed included health, social science, education, and public affairs. 133 studies were screened and of those, 18 met the criteria of scholarly research and had alignment with the common understandings of collaboration. The review identified 19 factors that contributed to the success of collaboration. The most common factors observed in successful collaborations included a history of collaboration or cooperation within the community that is hosting the collaboration; mutual respect, understanding and trust among the members; an appropriate inclusion of diverse members that represents a cross-section of the community being served; all have a stake in the process and outcome of the collaboration; there is shared decision making among all members of the collaborative; open and frequent communication; and sufficient funding.

Most of these factors recognized in the Amherst Wilder literature review (Mattessich et al., 2001) align well with the framework of democratic engagement. The elements of respect, trust, and understanding characterize an asset orientation; diverse membership typifies inclusion; and the shared decision-making that allows for participation in the creation of the process and outcomes is a hallmark of a democratic process.

Collaboration is the process by which universities and communities leverage joint networks and their social capital to address social issues. The process of collaboration distinguishes engagement from outreach (Driscoll, 2008) and is embodied in partnerships
between IHE's and communities. Thus, the medium for engagement, comprised of networks and collaboration, is partnerships (Brukardt, Holland, Percy, & Zimpher, 2004).

**Constitutive elements of partnership.**

Collaborations and long-term partnerships are especially appropriate as a means for addressing the reform of large-scale systems such as education, health care, public safety, economic development and job creation, corrections and social services, or workforce development that face communities today. (Ramaley, 2000, p. 240)

Disparate activities will not yield the type of engagement that is capable of addressing the types of large-scale systemic issues to which Ramaley refers. The types of partnerships that Harkavy calls serious and significant (2003) are the vehicle by which IHE’s enter into civic participation in serious and significant work of their local communities.

“Neither internal tinkering nor disparate, unconnected, unintegrated service-learning projects will help create that system” (p. xiii).

In their wingspread report on community engagement, Brukhardt, Holland, Percy, and Zimpher (2004) claim, “Partnerships are the currency of engagement—the medium of exchange between university and community and the measurement of an institution's level of commitment to working collaboratively” (p. 8). Their focus on partnerships as the very means of engagement and measurement of commitment differentiates the concept of engagement from other forms of community-university interactions.

*Community-university partnerships* (Gelmon, Holland, Seifer, Shinnamon, & Connors, 1998; Messer, 1996; Reardon, 2000) have also been referred to as *campus-
community partnerships (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Enos & Morton, 2003; Rubin, 2000; Sandy & Holland, 2006), service-learning partnerships (Dorado & Giles, 2004; Foss, Bonaiuto, Johnson, & Moreland, 2003; Jacoby, 2003), community based research networks or partnerships (Metzler et al., 2003; Meredith Minkler, 2005), and agency-university partnerships (M. J. Austin et al., 1999). This study refers to partnerships as community-university partnerships or campus-community partnerships.

Several similar definitions of such partnerships also exist. These alternate forms of the definition of community-campus partnerships seem to agree that university stakeholders and community stakeholders work together, collaborate, take action, jointly apply solutions, or cooperate to address shared goals and have mutually-understood structures and processes (see Table 2). This study uses the Carnegie Foundation (2007) definition of campus-community partnerships: “ongoing, long-term relationships in which each partner brings individual goals, needs, assets and strategies, and through collaborative processes blends them into common goals and outcomes.”

Relationships. Partnerships are built upon relationships, within which individual members have the competencies to conduct collaborative work and capacities to adopt co-roles. There is some conflation of the term partnerships with relationships (Bringle et al., 2009; Clayton et al., 2010). This confusion may be due to the fact that partnerships are built on constellations of relationships and are necessarily constituted by relationships (Gass, 2010; S. R. Jones, 2003).
Table 2: Common Characteristics of Community-University Partnership Definitions

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<td>Shared identity/ shared issues/ shared goals</td>
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<td>Mutually understood process and structure</td>
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<td>Work together/ collaborate/ cooperate</td>
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<td>Meet community needs defined by community</td>
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<td>Sustained involvement</td>
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<td>Participants learn</td>
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<td>Participants practice civic skills</td>
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<td>Partnership transforms IHE</td>
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<td>Partnership transforms community</td>
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<td>Assets of all are acknowledged</td>
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<td>Embodies reciprocity</td>
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<td>Partnership builds capacity of partners</td>
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<td>Partners maintain their own identities</td>
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Two recent works provide specificity to the way relationships (and the stakeholders therein) contribute to partnerships. Bringle, Clayton and Price (2009) present a model by which stakeholders are identified and described. The authors review literature pertinent to the development of relationships in service-learning and civic engagement and put forward a conceptual model of these relationships that provides
specificity and differentiation between stakeholders. This model, called SOFAR, positions students (S), organizations (O), faculty (F), administrators (A), and community residents (R) in visual relationship with one another yet provides delineation between groups. This work claims that as relationships embody an increasing level of closeness, they move toward the status of partnerships.

Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq and Morrison (2010) expand on this work to move examination from dyads to multiple dyads, thus promoting examination of whole networks. Both works establish that closeness, equity and integrity distinguish relationships from partnerships. Clayton et al. go on to say that these elements are “necessary but not sufficient conditions for relationships to take the form of partnerships.” Additional elements may include quality, interactions and outcomes (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002).

Relationship competencies. Collectively, the elements of quality, interactions, and outcomes are associated with individual relationship competencies (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; El Ansari et al., 2002). Bringle and Hatcher (2002) outline three key relationship competencies: asserting displeasure, providing emotional support, and managing conflict within their larger work on developing the CAPSL model. Using Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis’ experiences attending the national Campus Compact institute on integrating service with academic learning, attending national conferences on service-learning and experiential education, reviewing relevant literature, benchmarking with peer institution programs, and participating in the higher education service-learning list serve, the authors developed a model for implementation of service-learning which they call the Comprehensive Action Plan for Service-Learning (CAPSL). The CAPSL
model identifies the constituencies, activities, outcomes, monitoring, and evaluation that is necessary to institutionalize service-learning within a higher education institution.

El Ansari, Phillips and Zwi (2002) outline five additional competencies that are more focused on public work: educational competencies, partnership fostering skills, community involvement expertise, change agent proficiencies, and strategic and management capabilities. El Ansari et al. examined five cases of public health partnerships in South Africa to determine the degree to which professional and community team members felt one another demonstrated these capacities. Using a cross-sectional, multi-site survey, in which professional public health staff rated themselves and the lay people with whom they partnered on five domains of partnership expertise. Lay partners ranked professional staff in the same way. While community members perceived that the professionals exhibited the competencies to a high degree and professionals ranked their own levels of competence highly, the professionals did not view the community in the same way. They did not feel that community participants exhibited as high levels of partnership competence even though the community felt as such. These findings inform their recommendation that partnerships pay attention to capacity-building, skills transfer, and empowerment strategies.

Capacity. Minkler, Breckwich Vasquez, Tajik, and Petersen (2008) also identified capacity as central to partnerships. They provide a cross-site case study of four community-based participatory research studies that address environmental health issues. The four cases were selected from a group of ten that were studied by the Kellogg Foundation to document the impact of community-based participatory research on health promotion policy. The four represent those projects that were concerned with
investigating issues of environmental justice. Over the course of three to five site visits, 23 interviews were conducted with community and university stakeholders involved in the research partnerships. An additional focus group was conducted at each site with community members who had participated in the research partnership. Themes were coded across the sites as determined by the areas of focus within the interview protocol. These focus areas include partnership formation, partnership functioning, partnership effects on research, partnership context, capacity building, policy actions, impacts, and effectiveness. The analysis utilized Goodman’s 10 dimensions of community capacity. Certain characteristics were found to have influenced the community’s capacity to participate in the CBPR partnerships. These characteristics were observed in at least three of the four partnerships and include leadership; participation or people power; use of diverse skills; resources that enabled the effective use of the previously mentioned skills; strong use of coalitions and social networks; a strong sense of community among the project participants; strong understanding of the history of the partnership and the community; strong commitment to the values of environmental justice; and existence of reflection among partnership activities.

Kirby (2010) provides an insightful commentary on the “philosophy of co-“ (p. 377) by way of thematically analyzing six chapters of the recent text, “Participatory Partnerships for Social Action and Research” (Harter, Hamel-Lambert, & Millesen, 2010). Within her essay, Kirby states that capacity-building amongst partners is integral to the ability to achieve co-roles. Co-creation and co-roles imply a sense of people working “with” one another as opposed to doing things “for” one another (Jameson et al., 2011). According to Kirby, the “philosophy of co-“ is represented throughout the
scholarship of engagement in such forms as co-educators, co-learners and co-creation. In instances when the actual prefix is not present, the spirit of the philosophy can be found in expressions of shared decision making, mutual ownership and partnering. While the concept of co-roles does not mean that each participant has the same role within the partnership (Jameson et al., 2011), co-roles do necessitate an appropriate amount of capacity for the role being taken.

Community partners need to work with faculty and students to learn the language and skills necessary for inquiry and thus build their own capacity for research. Faculty must move beyond a privileged role as the sole disseminators of knowledge and grow to include and accept both students and community partners as contributors. All stakeholders must develop competencies for community-engaged work (Jameson et al., 2011).

In summary, the public work that is shared amongst community and campus partners occurs in the context of partnerships that are enabled through the process of collaboration, and collaboration is made possible by communities and IHE’s jointly leveraging the social capital of networks. Collectively, the concepts of partnerships, collaboration, and networks make engagement possible. The central interest of this study is community-university partnerships, which serve as the medium for engagement and public work. Accordingly, an explanation of the state of community-university partnership research is put forth in the next section.

Community-University Partnership Research

There is a large body of literature on partnerships, in general. This study has as its primary focus community-university partnerships, and this section explores literature that
addresses these in terms of efficacy and sustainability, participation and the redress of uneven power, and transformative potential. Partnerships between universities and their communities (or entities within a university with entities within a community) are becoming prevalent (Astin & Astin, 2000; Ehrlich & Hollander, 1998; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Reardon, 2000), or at least the rhetoric and terminology of partnership is predominant (Bringle et al., 2009) as campuses respond to the demands for the academy to recognize and take action in response to social issues and local problems (S. R. Jones, 2003). “The community emerges more clearly as a partner as we identify, describe, think about, and seek to respond to the direct and indirect impacts institutions of higher education and communities have on one another” (Enos & Morton, 2003, p. 22).

In 2000, Rubin conducted a review of community-university partnership literature and concluded that six types of writing about community-university partnerships existed. One type is the self-study account that is a retrospective reflection, generally given by higher education faculty or staff, in which they observe the patterns that emerged in a partnership in which they participated. While anecdotal, these accounts provide “systematic examination of complex processes by people with unmatched access” (p. 221). A second type of writing is local evaluations of partnerships. These evaluations are often used for planning purposes and to see how community and university stakeholders perceive the goals of the partnership and the progress toward those goals. A third type of writing explores the actual methods of evaluating partnerships. According to Rubin, what becomes clear is that the complexity of the processes involved in these partnerships may create a need for qualitative investigation in addition to the quantitative investigation of outcomes, the latter being the approach to investigation that is often
championed by funding agencies. A fourth type of writing is comprised of collective case studies, some of which are comparative. Whereas singular case studies are limited by the specificity of context and activities, collective case studies illustrate phenomena across contexts. A fifth type of writing is the compilation of databanks that house data from multisite programs. Finally, a sixth type of writing is on large scale, typically national, evaluations of local partnerships. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Outreach Partnership Center program, commonly referred to as COPC, is one such example.

Rubin (2000) calls attention to the fact that much of the literature at the time of his review anecdotally argued that community engagement qualitatively differed from other forms of outreach but that it is essential to empirically examine this assumption. Rubin believed it was necessary to take on the duty of “defining, measuring, and interpreting [partnerships’] novel and essential characteristics” (p. 219).

In light of these actualities, a modest empirical literature has grown up using partnership, itself, as the unit of analysis (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Dorado & Giles, 2004; Harter et al., 2010; Jacoby, 2003).

Within their review of service-learning research that investigate the value of service-learning to communities, Cruz and Giles (2000) determine that very little is offered by way of documenting the impact of service-learning on communities, that the available literature was a mixture of research and program evaluation but a significant amount was anecdotal and descriptive, and that most work cited community as one variable amidst others. As a result of their review, they present a four-facet model for service-learning research that seeks to better understand the impact of service-learning on
community. The model’s four recommendations are that 1) the partnership become the unit of analysis, 2) the research embody community input, reciprocity, and partnership, 3) the method adopt an action research orientation, and 4) the research take an asset-seeking perspective that structures the driving questions around identification of assets through service-learning.

Dorado and Giles (2004) produced a grounded-theory study as part of a larger research project on service-learning partnerships, and for the immediate investigation, 27 interviews were conducted over a year and a half period throughout 13 partnerships in New England. The process was multistage, beginning with the development of a database that included 150 individuals at approximately 125 institutions of higher education, most of which were in New England. From this database, participants were surveyed so that a sample could be developed that yielded comparable, rich examples of partnerships. From these efforts, 57 partnerships were identified in 99 questionnaires. From this, 13 partnerships were selected based on the criteria of comparability and richness. 27 people within the 13 partnerships were interviewed. Using grounded theory methodology, data were analyzed and the study concluded that there are particular pathways partnerships follow in their activities of engagement. The study makes three claims: 1) service-learning partnerships can be on one of three pathways labeled tentative, aligned, and committed; 2) There is relationship between the age of the partnership and how committed its members are to its success; and 3) community participants are more likely than their university counterparts to extend their commitment to the partnership beyond the discrete service-learning activities which initiated the partnership.
A growing number of scholars support the need for such research on community-campus partnerships, including the relationships of which they are comprised and sometimes conflated. Scholars have contributed work on topics that are particularly germane to democratic engagement. The topics that are synthesized in this section include efficacy and sustainability of partnerships, participation and the redress of uneven power, and the transformative potential of partnership.

**Efficacy and sustainability of partnerships.** Several frameworks describe the characteristics of a good or effective partnership. Community Campus Partnerships for Health (2006), established nine principles of good campus-community partnerships (Table 3). Campus Compact (Torres & Schaffer, 2000) created benchmarks that indicate features of successful partnerships (Table 5). From the community perspective, the Council of Independent Colleges (Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, & Goss, 2003) outlined seven themes of good partnerships (Table 4) from focus groups of 19 community partners who attended their two-day summit. Sandy and Holland (2006) also used focus group methods to obtain 99 community partner perspectives on community-campus partnerships.

The characteristics included in each of these frameworks overlap significantly. All four converge on mutual authority for decision-making, aligning partnership efforts with community goals and assets, and balancing benefits with costs. Sandy and Holland (2006) found that community partners identify many of the same characteristics of successful or effective partnerships as the other frameworks. However, community partners’ prioritization of the characteristics differed from that of the other frameworks. Sandy and Holland concluded that the highest priority for community partners was that relationships matter: projects and activities stem from relationships rather than activities
building partnerships. They found that the second highest priority was open communication between university and community stakeholders. Finally, the results indicated that the third highest priority was for university stakeholders to understand the perspective of the community.

**Table 3: Principles of Good Community Campus Partnerships (CCPH, 2006)**

1. Partnerships form to serve a specific purpose and may take on new goals over time.

2. Partners have agreed upon mission, values, goals, measurable outcomes, and accountability for the partnership.

3. The relationship between partners is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness, and commitment.

4. The partnership builds upon identified strengths and assets, but also works to address needs and increase capacity of all partners.

5. The partnership balances power among partners and enables resources among partners to be shared.

6. Partners make clear and open communication an ongoing priority by striving to understand each other's needs and self-interests, and developing a common language.

7. Principles and processes for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners, especially for decision making and conflict resolution.

8. There is feedback among all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes.

9. Partners share the benefits of the partnership's accomplishments.

10. Partnerships can dissolve and need to plan a process for closure.
Table 4: Characteristics of Good Partnerships (Leiderman et al., 2003)

- Partnership goals and processes are mutually determined: authority for decision-making is shared between campus and community members. Community stakeholders are able to determine who is welcome to work with the community and what the goals and expectations of that work will be.
- Community stakeholders are equal partners, jointly determining the vision, resources, rewards, and risks of the collaboration.
- Partnership strategies meet specific community goals that are informed by a deep understanding of the community’s interests, assets, needs, and opportunities.
- Roles and responsibilities are shared with community partners but take into account their available capacity and skills. Roles and responsibilities are not the same for both community and campus partnership members.
- Partnerships have parity: campus partners understand and value organizational expertise at all staff levels. This expertise includes formal and informal academic and professional credentials.
- Benefits (short and long term) to each partner sufficiently justify the costs, level of effort, and potential risks of participation.
- Evaluation and continuous improvement ensure responsibility for the implementation of jointly determined plans, quality work, and the accrual of benefits.

Table 5: Campus Compact Benchmarks for Campus/Community Partnerships:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage I: Designing the Partnership</td>
<td>Genuine democratic partnerships are:</td>
<td>Founded on a shared vision and clearly articulated values:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Members constitute a common community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Resources and skills are shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beneficial to partnering institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The tangible incentives to participate build faith among partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage II: Building Collaborative Relationships</td>
<td>Genuine democratic partnerships that build strong collaborative relationships are:</td>
<td>Composed of interpersonal relationships based on trust and mutual respect</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Built on networks of individual relationships that deepen over time.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- These relationships are characterized by trust and mutual respect, equal voice,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shared responsibilities, risk and rewards, forums for communication, accountability,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shared vision, and mutual interest.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multidimensional: they involve the participation of multiple sectors that act in service of a complex problem</td>
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</table>
They solve problems that no one institution could solve on its own.  
Members seek out the assets of each partner.  
Build problem-solving strategies that are comprehensive.  
Culture clash is probable if not inevitable  

| Clearly organized and led with dynamism  
Accountability, energy, clear purpose, and inspiration combine to effect change.  |

| Stage III: Sustaining Partnerships over Time | Genuine democratic partnerships that will be sustained over time are:  
Integrated into the mission and support systems of the partnering institutions  
Aligned with missions and priorities of institutions that are involved.  |

| Sustained by a “partnering process” for communication, decision making, and the initiation of change  
Processes to ensure the sharing of opinions and ideas are critical  
This allows for change in direction and change in scope of work.  |

| Evaluated regularly with a focus on methods and outcomes  
Evaluated on multiple levels: impact, processes, and products  |

Planning, managing, and evaluating partnerships are necessary. The CIC report (Leiderman et al., 2003), CCPH principles (2006), and Campus Compact benchmarks (Torres & Schaffer, 2000) agree that the practice of using evaluation and assessment is critical and helps to achieve accountability. Schumaker, Reed, and Woods (2000) identify, through their case study of a Community Outreach Partnership Center at the University of Nebraska, the need to determine the structure and process for such planning, management, and evaluation. The researchers believe that the quality of the interactions is less effective without such a structure. Gass (2010) studied 23 partnerships by surveying 23 faculty and 42 community partners. He determined that structural elements such as mission, governance, and partnership assessment that are
agreed upon by all partners have a statistically significant relationship with operating dimensions such as trust, respect, and communication.

Research on partnerships indicates a link between planning, assessment, and the sustainability of a partnership. In her nine lessons of partnership, Ramaley (2000) cites the practice of mutual learning as key to partnerships evolving and underscores the fact that this takes time. She calls for continual assessment from all points of view. Austin’s (2004) case study of a multi-year, large-scale partnership outlines four stages, the second stage of which is focused on sustaining the partnership through assessment and subsequent modification. Gass’s (2008, 2010) statistical model includes variables of partnership assessment and sustainability. The endurance (Daynes, Howell, & Lindsay, 2003) of partnerships appears to be a balance of commitment (Dorado & Giles, 2004) with the introduction of new members (D. E. Austin, 2004; Ramaley, 2000).

This literature suggests that the common characteristics of effective and sustainable partnerships include shared authority for decision-making, alignment between the partnership’s work and the goals and assets of the community, balance between members’ benefits and costs, and structural efforts to plan and assess the partnership. Each of these point to equitable involvement by both university and community stakeholders. To achieve such equity, power imbalances must be addressed.

**Participation and the redress of uneven power.** Uneven power is present in many instances of community-campus collaboration. If one party has all of the power, or the majority of power, collaboration is impossible (El Ansari et al., 2002). While some believe that the very act of communities participating in joint efforts with campuses negates uneven power, participation is not the same as shared power. Participation is a
term sometimes exploited by those in power to manipulate those without power. Participation without a redistribution of power promotes the status quo. Redistribution of power is a deliberate inclusion of those without power into decision-making processes (Arnstein, 1969).

The way that academic and non-academic people come together determines the level of participation. For example, there is a high degree of participation in community-engaged research when the outside researchers serve as facilitators and the people being affected by the dilemma hold much of the decision-making power (Park, 1999). Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) review methods used in participatory research and from this explore the distinctions between participatory and traditional research methods. Their primary finding is that the degree of participation is related to the location of power within the research partnership.

Participatory approaches are a response to research in which ordinary people have not had power, agency, or representation. Thus, a participatory orientation is not a set of techniques, but a mindset in which the intent of the academic is to shift the power, agency, and representation away from him or herself. This mindset leads a community-engaged researcher to ask, “…by and for whom [is] research conceptualized and conducted?” (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995, p. 1667)

Wallerstein and Duran (2006) acknowledge decades of rhetorical emphasis on participation, but believe its actual nuance and presence have only recently been explored. There is a difference between participants, participation, and a participatory approach. The differences must be parsed out lest these terms blur to become a “catch-all cliché” (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995, p. 1668). Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) believe the
difference between these terms lies in who “owns and acts on the information which is sought” (p. 1668). They suggest that the expressions of participation can be organized as a typology that ranges from shallow to deep participatory orientation.

Community development and community organizing literatures provide some useful organizing frameworks to parse out the terminology of participation and explore the relationship between participation and power. Stephen Biggs offers a framework related to agriculture, and Sherry Arnstein provides one related to community organizing (see Table 6). Cornwall and Jewkes (1993) point to Stephen Biggs’ four modes of participation to see how participation can range from contractual to collegiate. Biggs concluded that the range from contractual to collegiate participation depends on how community members’ skills are integrated and on how much control is shared. Sherry Arnstein’s (1969) framework uses ladder imagery to describe eight types of citizen participation, ranging from nonparticipation to token involvement to having citizen power. Biggs’ contractual and Arnstein’s nonparticipation modes appear to be quite transactional. There appears to be no sharing of power or decision-making, and participants are only a loosely recognized group of individuals involved in the project. The consultative mode and tokenism grouping of modes share a focus on obtaining participant opinion; but again, do not result in any rearrangement of power. Finally, Biggs’ collaborative and collegiate modes and Arnstein’s partnership, delegated power, and citizen power illustrate types of participation that encompass a range of power-redistribution, moving from shared decision making through citizen-only control.

Participation and power begin to converge at the end of each participation framework. As the non-researcher moves toward Biggs’ mode of collegiate participation
or toward Arnstein’s rung of partnership, the research process becomes more open to responding to shared decision-making.

**Table 6: Conceptions of Participation**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collegiate Participation</td>
<td>8  Citizen Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers and local people work together as colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>with different skills to offer, in a process of mutual</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning where local people have control over the</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Participation</td>
<td>7  Delegated Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers and local people work together on projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>designed, initiated and managed by researchers.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultative Participation</td>
<td>6  Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are asked for their opinions and consulted by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>researchers before interventions are made.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contractual Participation</td>
<td>5  Placation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are contracted into the projects of researchers to</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>take part in their enquiries or experiments</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4  Consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3  Informing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2  Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nonparticipation: Power-holders desire to educate or cure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>participants.</td>
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As these organizing frameworks are examined, the assumption can be made that full participatory orientation is most desirable for all involved. Green (2004) suggests that characterization be chosen carefully, citing the common misuse of the word “equally” (p. 699) to describe university expectations of community participation. Uniformly requiring all partners to carry an equal share of the work does not take into consideration the available time, skill, and interest level of the community partner. Therefore, Green suggests that requiring communities be involved as equal partners may present an ethical challenge. Green prefers to use Minkler’s (2004) vocabulary of
equality to acknowledge that those involved must attend to the pre-existing inequalities (the value given to research activities in the academic setting versus the value in community settings, the differential in capacity of expert researchers and community researchers, and the community-capitol needed to gain access to data sources), rather than subscribe to a required level of participation that may not be appropriate.

Power and control arise as limiting or facilitating factors to participation. Power and control are manifested as dynamic tensions within social change coalitions (Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1994). Addressing these tensions moves a relationship beyond one party’s consent to participate in another party’s efforts and begins to form a two-way arrangement (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). This type of arrangement is more akin to democratic engagement than token participation.

Power is ascribed to the person or people who are considered legitimate decision-makers within the partnership, who speak for the community or the university, and who own and have access to resources (Jackson & Meyers, 2000). Power is also discernable in the degree to which someone can participate fully in the work of the partnership. Full participation can be inhibited by differences in cultural norms of communication, meeting expectations, location, and format. Access to information is also a way to inhibit or facilitate full participation (El Ansari et al., 2002). Information includes data, histories, and social connections.

Uneven distribution of power is also witnessed in who is able to frame the problems to be solved (Miller & Hafner, 2008). This idea was brought to life within Miller and Hafner’s instrumental case study that produced a deep, longitudinal account of a community-university partnership between Mountain University and Mountain City.
The case drew data from interviews with 17 participants, observations, and document review to explore the nature of the partnerships as “authentically collaborative relationships (p. 67)” using Freire’s concept of dialogical action. Findings indicated the ways in which the participants of the partnership experienced Freire’s tenets of humility, faith in people, hope, and critical thinking. Some areas of departure from these tenets include unresolved power dynamics, the use of mainstream ways of conducting meetings, and an imbalance in how issues of need were framed.

The very act of identifying something as an issue of concern establishes the legacy of a partnership’s work. Sorenson, Reardon, and Klump (2003) remind us that there are “corrosive effects of the legacy of uneven relationships between universities and communities” (p. 209). If enough partnership agendas are chosen and framed by universities in isolation from their communities, there can be drastic effects on the long-term benefit to the community.

Wiewel, Gaffikin and Morrissey (2000) claim that power inequity among community-campus partnerships is inevitable and that griping about it is “missing the point” (p. 34). More importantly, members of the partnership must focus on diffusing power (2000). When power is leveraged for the joint work of a partnership and made accessible to members who have less power, the capacity of those partners is expanded (Enos & Morton, 2003). Controlling the access to power to create dependence is not the goal (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Rather, access to information, resources, and decision-making should build autonomy and capacity. To do this, however, requires willingness for all parties to change, or transform (Enos & Morton, 2003).
The relationship between power and participation explored here draws from literature present within community-university engagement and international development. What may complicate the conversation, however, is a more philosophical understanding of the ways that participation is encouraged and shared through a mode of subversive control. Foucault (1977; 1983) introduced the idea of pastoral power as a means of domination that is subversive and stands apart from the violent discipline encountered in other forms of domination. It is through the very care taken of others that those others are dominated. If we apply this form of control to community-university partnerships, the means to empower participation can be questioned. Bevir (1999) describes pastoral power further saying,

Pastoral power requires individuals to internalize various ideals and norms so that they both regard an external body as concerned with their good and strive to regulate themselves. (p. 351).

Though the literature presented here supports the diffusion of power through the involvement of the marginalized party in partnership decision-making and participation, the idea of pastoral power troubles this simple remedy. If participation in decision-making is encouraged through a caretaking and indirect means to control how the party participates, it is still a form of domination. Shutz (2004) characterizes this as domination by co-opting the creativity and agency of the persons involved. It is important to note that while Schutz recognizes the legitimacy of pastoral power, he explores it in relation to more violent forms of domination and claims it is often found in environments of privilege. This is consonant with the location of community-university partnerships in that universities are places of privilege and community organizations and leaders who
choose to work with universities have basic capacity to marshal organizational collaborations.

The application of pastoral power to community-university engagement is important. Power is a particularly prevalent issue within community-university partnership research and participation is identified as an indicator of shared power. The literature discussed here challenges a uni-dimensional portrayal of participation, noting that participation can range from tokenism through full power diffusion. The discussion concludes by introducing the notion of pastoral power as a device to trouble the idea that so long as universities empower their community partners to participate in decision-making processes, they have eliminated domination and control. Rather, it is possible that even at the most participatory end of the power-sharing end of the spectrum some form of subversive co-option of partner agency may have occurred.

**Transformative potential of partnerships.** Rubin (2000) believes that the examination of structures, activities, and outcomes of partnerships is not sufficient. Studies must also include the purpose of the partnerships. Saltmarsh et al. (2009) agree. They claim that for too long the focus has been on understanding activities, while the field of engagement has ignored the larger purposes that should drive the work. The notion of transformation is central to the framework of democratic engagement, as well as a byproduct of reciprocal practice and the political dynamic of redressing uneven power within the work of engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).

The purposes we strive to achieve are guided by our assumptions and orientations. Kecskes (2006) investigated the orientations of community-campus partnerships by applying a cultural theory framework. The research resulted in a typology of frameworks
that are based on Mary Douglas’ group grid theory. The typology includes individualistic, fatalist, egalitarian, and hierarchist orientations. Each orientation supports certain purposes. Partnerships that are technocratically oriented follow a hierarchical orientation that yield transactional processes and serve instrumental purposes. Partnerships that are democratically oriented follow an egalitarian orientation that yield a collaborative process and shared outcomes.

Kecskes’ cultural theory typology complements a continuum developed to characterize the purposes or outcomes of partnerships as transactional to transformational (Enos & Morton, 2003). The continuum represents a theory of development pertaining to partnerships based on transformational leadership theory. Partnerships are placed on a continuum of transactional purposes and outcomes to transformational purposes and outcomes (p. 25). Progression on the continuum depends on whether the membership group identity stays the same (transactional) or transforms to create a larger definition of community. Partnerships that are transformative in nature are more closely aligned with democratic engagement. Enos and Morton (2003) define transformative partnerships as welcoming a shared identity among campus and community partners and “mutual redefinition of the issues on which they are joining energy to work, an understanding that they are working out of a shared context, and that they are interested in what transformation means for both individuals and institutions” (p. 30).

Inspired by the work of Burns (1978) on transactional and transformative leadership relationships, this work proposes a theoretical perspective for examining campus-community partnerships as they move from transactional to transformative relationships. In this framework, the authors claim that such partnerships have the ability
not only to accomplish specific tasks, but also to transform individuals, institutions, organizations, and communities.

Enos and Morton provide a valuable discussion concerning the differences between transactional and transformative relationships. According to them, transactional relationships operate within existing structures in which partners connect together because each has something that the other perceives as useful. These relationships are instrumental and project-based. They are characterized by limited commitments and minimum disruption of the regular work of the organizations and their constituents. By the end of transactional relationships, partners feel contented with the outcomes, but not much changed. Transformative relationships progress in less defined manners and there are expectations that things may be altered and order may be disrupted. These relationships are characterized by genuine and long-term commitments. Partners reflect deeply on their organizations and examine the way they define and comprehend problems. Transformative relationships can lead to the development of new values and identities.

In light of their framework, the article advances a typology for the development of campus-community partnerships. In this typology, the depth and complexity of campus-community partnerships increases over time. It is suggested that the development of campus-community partnerships does not follow a linear fashion. Rather, the development of such partnerships could be better perceived as “accretions that are layered over time” (p. 26). This framework is comprised of five levels based on the depth and complexity of the partnership: one–time events and projects, short-term placements,
ongoing placemats and mutual dependence, core partnerships and interdependence, and transformation and joint creation of work and knowledge.

The transactional to transformational continuum was later expanded by Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, and Morrison (2011) to include exploitation for those partnerships in which the work does not only leave the parties unchanged but actually position one party to take advantage of the other. Their study describes the pilot use of a scale designed to distinguish between exploitative, transactional, and transformational aspects of such relationships. The scale, entitled “The Transformational Relationship Evaluation Scale (TRES)” includes nine key attributes: outcomes, common goals, decision-making, resources, conflict management, identity formation, power, significance, and satisfaction and change for the better. The scale was piloted in a first phase to investigate the faculty perspective relative to the faculty-organization dyad of the SOFAR model. The scale was used with 20 experienced service-learning faculty via interview or survey. The pilot results indicate that the scale’s items were internally consistent, that the primary barrier to growth in partnerships is lack of time, that some respondents focused more on the relationship their students had with partners than their own, and that participation in the study helped some participants to further examine their own assumptions and experiences with service-learning.

Jameson, Clayton and Jaeger (2011) contribute a model of community-engaged scholarship to the literature on transformative purposes. The model presents a form of community engaged scholarship that is achieved through mutually transformative partnerships. Community engaged scholarship is defined as “scholarly activities related to research and/or teaching that involve full collaboration of students, community
partners, and faculty as co-educators, co-learners, and co-generators of knowledge and that address questions of public concern” (p. 259). Their work shows that community engaged scholarship of this nature embodies two commitments: one to democratically-oriented engagement such as that discussed earlier and one to mutual transformation of all involved. Partnerships that are democratically oriented can enact mutual transformation when they “…foster paradigm shift and collaborative capacity building which in turn engender transformation in individual and collective ways of being, knowing, and engaging” (p. 260).

Four conditions are necessary to achieve transformation (Jameson et al., 2011). The first is that the partnership occurs in an environment where it is possible to use community-engaged scholarship for the co-development of all involved. As participants develop and grow, they experience growth together. The second condition is a redress of uneven power within the relationship. Jameson et al. (2011) emphasize that redistribution of power does not obligate the stakeholders to take on equal or same roles. Rather, the processes of the partnership are designed and implemented in ways that intentionally avoid marginalizing any one member or their contributions. The third condition is time. The authors claim that length of time (or age) of the partnership is conducive to transformation, so long as the dynamic within that time is not one of dependence. The fourth condition is attention to language. The language of using, doing research on, doing for, and meeting needs depicts a deficit-oriented approach to the partnership. The language of we, doing with, and other co-phrases depict an asset-oriented approach.
In summary of this section, the research on community-university partnerships has used the partnership, itself, as the unit of analysis to clarify the processes, purposes, and roles of partnerships. This study is centrally concerned with community-university partnerships in light of the conceptual framework of democratic engagement, therefore community-university partnership research was examined that supports the tenets of democratic engagement: successful engagement that seeks to collaboratively generate and discover knowledge with diverse stakeholders in a spirit of reciprocity and transformation (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). A broad review of literature focused on the efficacy and sustainability of partnerships yields two prevailing elements that are aligned with this framework: successful partnerships both share amongst their members the authority for decision-making, as well as align the work of the partnership with community goals and assets. The research on participation and power reviewed herein finds that the qualities of full participation and diffusion of power are central to partnerships that align with democratic principles. Finally, the research that investigates transformation within partnerships is summarized, illustrating that partnerships that seek a transformative purpose are intentionally designed to facilitate an egalitarian orientation, co-roles, and capacity building for all involved. The next section uses these features to present the focus of this study: democratically engaged community-university partnerships.

**Democratically Engaged Partnerships**

Community-university partnerships operating under a democratic-centered framework are the focus of this study. These partnerships are a process within a process – the process of partnering within the process of democratic engagement. This study
proposes that democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs) are created when the processes and values of democratic engagement are applied to community-university partnerships. Certain roles, purposes, and processes are enacted when the framework of democratic engagement is applied to community-university partnerships.

**Roles, processes, and purposes of democratically engaged partnerships.**

Democratic engagement has a reliance on inclusivity, reciprocity, and shared authority for knowledge construction (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) and this reliance promotes particular stakeholder roles and processes for collaboration. The membership of a DEP involves a diverse array of community and university stakeholders. The roles that each occupies include collaborator, solution generator, knowledge producer, willing participant in problem solving, co-creator, co-learner, and co-educator.

Diverse community and university stakeholders interact in the same problem-solving domain, not as participant and expert, but as equal-status solution generators (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). The individual capabilities of each stakeholder are leveraged for collective problem solving (Dewey, 1916). The collective problem solving is carried out in a reciprocal way in which individual workers take on co-roles of mutual transformation (Jameson et al., 2011).

Inclusion, collaboration, reciprocation, transformation, power diffusion, and knowledge generation are the processes that animate democratically engaged partnerships. Democratic engagement results in community partnerships that yield “inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which academics share knowledge-generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 9).
The collaborative process yields a reciprocal approach to framing problems, choosing the means to address resultant issues, and assessing the outcomes of the solutions that were enacted. The orientation of democratic engagement toward reciprocity transforms the layperson and academic from independent workers to co-participants in the knowledge production process (Enos & Morton, 2003; Jameson et al., 2011). When working together to co-generate solutions, co-producers bring various forms of knowledge to the process that can result in holistic ways of knowing.

Regarding power diffusion, DEPs attend to power imbalances and are therefore inherently political (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Diffusion is achieved when capacity is built so that full participation amongst partnership members is possible (Wiewel et al., 2000).

Ultimately, the roles and processes of democratic engagement allow partnerships to work toward the purpose of leveraging social reconstruction to build a just and democratic society (Dewey, 1916). In the short-term, democratic engagement is concerned with “enhancing a public culture of democracy on and off campus and alleviating public problems through democratic means” (Saltmarsh et al, 2009, p. 6). As a result, purposeful transformation can occur within the valued knowledge framework, research and teaching of the academy.

**Importance of democratically engaged partnerships in democratic engagement.** A mixed endorsement of community-university partnerships is found within the foundational literature that informs the conceptual framework of democratic engagement as described in this study (Jameson et al., 2011; Kellogg Commission, 1998; Saltmarsh et al., 2009; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Each of the perspectives is discussed
here, in turn, to develop an understanding of the diverse attitudes toward community-university partnerships within democratic engagement.

Within the *Democratic Engagement White Paper* (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) partnerships are categorized as one indication that engagement is focused on activity and place rather than democratic processes and purposes.

The dominant form of civic engagement that has emerged in higher education reflects interactions … that are defined by partnerships (formal and informal relationships) and mutuality (each party in the relationship benefits from its involvement). Partnerships and mutuality allow the university to better meet its academic mission by improving teaching and learning and through community service and applied research opportunities. Communities benefit from the involvement of the university as students and faculty help in meeting unmet community needs. Engagement is enacted for the public, and because it entails the provision of a social service, it is understood by academics as “civic” in its aims and outcomes. (p. 8-9)

This appears to be a critique of community-university partnerships having been appropriated by institutions as emblems of their civic engagement. This is further explored by Saltmarsh and Hartley (2011) in their recent writing on democratic engagement. They claim that designing more effective partnerships will not bring about democratic engagement; that it is only through rethinking the entire enterprise of higher education that democratic engagement might be realized.

Jameson et al. (2011) explicitly address the phenomenon of partnerships within their consideration of democratic engagement. The primary focus of their work is on the
development of mutually transformative campus-community partnerships, which they note include growth for all involved stakeholders.

While community-engaged partnerships informed by the democratic paradigm likely do not always—perhaps need not always—transcend the minimal standards of mutual benefit required for authentic engagement, we suggest that they can do so, if designed and implemented intentionally as supportive contexts for mutual transformation. (p. 262)

The Kellogg Report (1998) entitled Returning to our Roots: the Engaged Campus portrays partnerships as a vehicle for engagement:

Embedded in the engagement ideal is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity. By engagement the Commission envisions partnerships, two-way streets defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table. (p. 13)

This clearly indicates particular values and processes for partnerships: reciprocity, respect, valuation of others’ contributions, and co-labor as denoted by two-way streets.

Weerts and Sandmann (2008) include community partners as a stakeholder group within their study, dedicating one research question to community partner perceptions of how institutions implement two-way partnerships. The study portrays partnerships as a potential facilitator of two-way knowledge flow between community and university. Within their discussion of findings, one small conclusion is that some institutions signal their external focus through the language of partnership, which Weerts and Sandmann equate to constructivist language.

It is true that community-university partnerships (as they are described by some institutions of higher education) can perpetuate a technocratic orientation. Given the
values and processes ascribed by the Kellogg report (1998), Weerts and Sandmann’s (2008) comparative case study, and work on mutual transformation (Jameson et al., 2011), perhaps the more technocratically oriented “partnerships” would be better referred to as relationships (Bringle et al., 2009). It is likely that the white paper (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) depicts partnership as a characteristic of technocratic engagement because so many community-university relationships have embraced a technocratic orientation while calling themselves partnerships. The whitepaper is the primary informant of the democratic engagement framework, but the other works provide significant development of the framework as it is interpreted and explored within this study. On this basis, the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships highlights the importance of democratic processes and roles, just as the Kellogg report, Weerts and Sandmann study, and Jameson et al. work on mutually transformative partnerships underscore the same.

More importantly, the phenomenon of DEPs could be a powerful tool to disrupt the culture and practices of higher education such that democratic purposes are pursued more widely within an institution of higher education. In Campbell and Lassiter’s (2010) description of their collaborative ethnography entitled, “The Other Side of Middletown,” they recognize their work as an example of democratic engagement. They further claim that collaborative ethnography and collaborative research partnerships can destabilize traditional epistemology to push for a more accessible and collaborative form of knowledge generation while elevating the purpose of such a project to the level of social transformation. The role such work plays in transforming the culture of higher education is one of grass-roots activism:
Although the vast majority of [faculty] have little control over the larger trajectory of our own academic institutions, much less over the restraints of a larger academic culture, many of us do have relatively more agency in our pedagogies.

(para. 45)

This work is promoted in what Campbell and Lassiter call participatory partnerships in which the stakeholders are co-learners and co-researchers. It is possible that DEPs (that truly embody the roles and processes of democratic engagement) can provide a locus of action and resistance to the dominant culture of higher education as they call attention to the structures and norms they bump up against in their pursuit of democratically oriented public work. Knowing more about such partnerships is critical to the development of democratic engagement and legitimizes the focus of this study.

**Gaps and influencers**

The framework of democratic engagement has some limitations when applied to the partnerships that are formed between community and university stakeholders. Inclusivity, reciprocity, and co-generation of knowledge are central tenets of democratic engagement and explain the collaborative roles and processes that community and university stakeholders maintain within the framework. However, there is no exploration within the framework of how community and university stakeholders arrive at such roles and processes. The process by which laypersons, or community stakeholders, come to experience the reciprocal role of knowledge-producer and equality of respect of their lay-knowledge (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) is unexplained.

Various studies outside of the democratic engagement framework provide starting points for considering the ways in which partnership members acquire the roles and
embrace the processes of democratic engagement. Three factors seem to influence such acquisition of roles and processes: a) learning, modeling, and empowering that occurs among stakeholders; b) individuals’ partnership competencies; and c) social, political, and organizational conditions. Contributions from various studies flesh out these factors. While the literature listed is not exhausted, it provides a starting point that can help to structure further study of these elements. These factors are first described and then summarized in Table 7 (see page 105).

**Learning, modeling, and empowering.** In a fully participatory partnership, members take on co-roles (Jameson et al., 2011). During collaboration, partners are also learning from and teaching each other. The members of the partnership assist each other in building the necessary capacity to engage fully with the partnership (Kirby, 2010). For example, one member of a partnership can acquire an appreciation for, and capacity to enact, reciprocal relationships by watching and listening to another partner.

The process of members taking on co-roles is closely related to the process of empowerment. Empowerment theory (the spirit of fairness, equality and respect) creates the necessary conditions for empowerment or the “equitable distribution of power” (Prilleltensky, 1994, p. 367). According to Prilletensky (1994), the process of empowerment is constituted through three moral values: a) self-determination: individuals choosing the actions that make positive change in their lives; b) distributive justice: “interventions…that rectify this imbalance of opportunities wherever it exists” (p. 360) at both the micro and macro levels of society; and c) “collaborative and democratic participation” (p. 360): that those affected should participate in the decision-making process. Consequently, the process of empowerment is intentionally used to build the
capacity of partnership members through the diffusion of power and thus makes full participation in the decision-making process possible.

**Individuals’ partnership competencies.** In terms of competencies, individual partnership members have certain abilities, skills, or dispositions that are inclined toward collaborative work, including relationship competencies, partnership competencies, and a disposition toward publicness. All three types of competencies rest on the individual partnership member having certain abilities, skills or dispositions that are inclined toward collaborative work.

Bringle and Hatcher (2002) put forward three competencies that they feel are necessary for successful relationships: asserting displeasure, providing emotional support, and managing conflict. Each of these competencies allows one to successfully address the tensions that are routinely involved in partnerships yet are rarely identified.

Mizrahi and Rosenthal (1994), through their study of social change coalitions, identify five kinds of dynamic tensions that are felt among partners: cooperation versus conflict (strive, not for unanimity, but for a way to work together); mixed loyalties (to organization or to the collaboration); autonomy versus accountability (when to act unilaterally or consult membership); means versus ends (focus on the process or the outcomes); and unity versus diversity (share interests but use strengths of diversity). Strong relationship competencies are critical for navigating these tensions.

El Ansari et al. outline five domains of stakeholder expertise that are critical for effective collaboration: a) educational competencies (ability to plan educational programs), b) partnership fostering experience (prior experience building and nurturing partnerships), c) community involvement skills (ability to convene and organize target
communities), d) change agents proficiencies, and e) strategic and management capacities (policy and budget implementation). When someone has greater levels of these types of expertise, she or he has a greater ability to participate in, contribute to, and maintain partnerships.

Mathews (1996) describes the disposition of publicness as a desire to make one’s work open, civic, inclusive, and pragmatic. People who have a disposition of publicness seek partnerships so that their work is integrated in a public process.

**Social, political, and organizational conditions.** With regard to the social, political and organizational conditions that foster the adoption of democratically oriented roles and processes, Enos and Morton (2003) acknowledge that predicting the conditions in which partnerships form is difficult. They do provide a handful of considerations, including social and political ecologies of the partnering institutions; organizationally-literate individuals who are members of the partnership; emergent trust that enables the navigation of risk; and faculty who have experienced a change in identity from pedagogue to that of community member or citizen servant. Enos and Morton’s (2003) list of conditions are oriented primarily to the IHE setting. A number of works address the conditions of readiness at the institution for fostering community engagement and partnerships (Furco, 2002; Holland, 1997; Ramaley, 2000), but there are few studies (beyond the concept of capacity) within community engagement literature that focus on readiness conditions within the community, itself. Mattesich et al. (2001) provide an overview of factors that affect collaboration. Some of these factors could be considered conditions that fit social and political ecologies and partnership literate individuals. Within their environment category, political climate is described as having political and
opinion leaders who do not oppose the work of the collaboration. Within the resources
category, a climate of available financial and human resources is necessary for the
successful operation of collaborations.

Table 7: Summary of DEP Factors and Supporting Characteristics

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<td></td>
<td>Taking on co-roles</td>
<td>Building one another’s capacity</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Asserting displeasure</td>
<td>Ability to navigate tension between cooperation vs. conflict, mixed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing emotional support</td>
<td>loyalties, autonomy vs. accountability, focus on process vs.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>outcome, and unity vs. diversity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Managing conflict</td>
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<th>El Ansari et al. (2002)</th>
<th>Asserting displeasure Providing emotional support Managing conflict</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Ability to navigate tension between cooperation vs. conflict, mixed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>loyalties, autonomy vs. accountability, focus on process vs. outcome, and unity vs. diversity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Educational competencies Partnership fostering experience Community involvement skills Change agent proficiencies Strategic and management capacities</td>
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<td>Matthews (1996)</td>
<td>Asserting displeasure Providing emotional support Managing conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicness</td>
<td>Ability to navigate tension between cooperation vs. conflict, mixed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>loyalties, autonomy vs. accountability, focus on process vs. outcome, and unity vs. diversity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Educational competencies Partnership fostering experience Community involvement skills Change agent proficiencies Strategic and management capacities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social, Political, and Organizational Conditions</td>
<td>Asserting displeasure Providing emotional support Managing conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enos and Morton (2003)</td>
<td>Ability to navigate tension between cooperation vs. conflict, mixed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social and political ecologies of partnering institutions</td>
<td>loyalties, autonomy vs. accountability, focus on process vs. outcome, and unity vs. diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizationally literate individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergent trust</td>
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<td>Mattesich et al. (2001)</td>
<td>Asserting displeasure Providing emotional support Managing conflict</td>
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<td>Social and political ecologies of institutions</td>
<td>Ability to navigate tension between cooperation vs. conflict, mixed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership literate individuals</td>
<td>loyalties, autonomy vs. accountability, focus on process vs. outcome, and unity vs. diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political and opinion leaders who support the collaboration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Available financial and human resources</td>
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In summary, members take on particular roles and processes in democratically engaged partnerships. The process by which members acquire and embrace these roles and processes is not explored within the democratic engagement framework. Other literature contains an array of work that may be helpful. Member-to-member learning and empowerment, individual competencies and dispositions, and social and political conditions may all contribute to one’s ability to take on democratic roles and processes.
When the lens of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977, 1978, 1986) is applied to these influencers, they are arranged in a reciprocal relationship with one another. Conditions external to the partnership, partnership learning interactions, and individual stakeholder attributes influence the emergence of democratic roles and processes. In turn, the processes and roles influence the expression of conditions, interactions, and attributes.

Gaps within the literature leave unexplained how democratic roles and processes emerge and are enacted. Some community-university partnership studies briefly mention potential influencers, but few empirically investigate them. As a result of democratic engagement being a relatively new framework, no empirical studies exist to explain the emergence of such roles and processes and the effect this has on a partnership’s democratic orientation. The study described in this dissertation provides an empirical investigation of the influences that affect the roles and processes of DEPs. It serves to fill this gap within the literature on community-university partnerships and democratic engagement.

Summary

Within this chapter, literatures have been presented that slowly build a solid understanding of the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships and their role in the promotion of democratic engagement. By beginning with a descriptive distinction between outreach, community engagement, and civic engagement, this chapter delves deeper into the charge levied within the historical review provided in chapter one: despite repeated calls to reclaim higher education’s civic purpose IHEs have failed to do so. Instead, they have generally implemented a menu of activities that allow them to serve various community needs and involve students in charitable works. Of course there are
exceptions to this rule, as for example the story shared in chapter one about Syracuse University, but this type of institutional change is met with considerable resistance. One source of that resistance may be the tension between technocratic and democratic orientations found within higher education. This tension and the characteristics of each orientation are explored within the second section of this chapter. Throughout the first and section sections, engagement is seen as the alternative to technocratic outreach or thin civic engagement. The third section of the literature review introduced three elements that undergird engagement to make clear what is needed to invoke an engagement stance: networks that produce social capital, collaboration that is reciprocal and strives for full participation, and relationships that through closeness and equity become partnerships. The fourth section of the literature review provided a narrow focus on the status of community-university partnership literature that is being produced within the fields of community engagement and service-learning. In doing so, it presented literature that surfaced community-university partnership issues of efficacy, sustainability, transformation, and participation. These were introduced upon the assumption these were particularly germane to the types of issues that are experienced in community-university partnerships with democratic orientations. The fifth section applies what is learned from community-university partnership research to the framework of democratic engagement so that the phenomenon of democratically engaged partnerships (DEPs) can be presented. The final section of the review explores factors that potentially influence the emergence and application of democratically oriented roles and processes within DEPs and concludes that the available literature does not adequately provide
empirical explanation for such influencers. At the conclusion of the sixth section, the present study is positioned as a way to fill this empirical gap.

The next chapter details the means used to study the relationship between conditions external to the partnership, partnership learning interactions, individual stakeholder attributes, and the emergence and enactment of democratic processes and roles within one DEP.
Chapter Three: Research Methods

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand how the conditions, partnership learning interactions, and stakeholder attributes influence the adoption of democratically oriented processes and roles within democratically engaged community-university partnerships. It is necessary to understand this so that we can nurture the characteristics of democratic engagement, which include inclusivity, reciprocity, and shared knowledge generation (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) among community-university partnerships. To achieve this purpose, a qualitative explanatory case study of a community-university partnership that is democratically oriented was conducted. Through interviews, observations, and document review, data were collected that help to explain the ways in which stakeholders adopt the roles and processes central to democratic engagement as it is expressed in a particular partnership.

Study Context

Relationship to gaps in theory and research. The conceptual framework of democratic engagement used in this study is rooted in four pieces of work: a) the Kellogg Report (1998) on engaged institutions makes clear the necessity for two-way, reciprocal engagement that is conducted through partnerships in which the assets of both community and university stakeholders are valued; b) Weerts and Sandmann (2008) describe the opportunity to shift from a delivery of expert knowledge from university to community, to collaborative generation and sharing of knowledge between partners; c) The Democratic Engagement White Paper clarifies the goals and processes of such engagement, calling for “inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which
academics share knowledge-generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving,” (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 9); d) Jameson et al. (2011) further clarify the outcomes of reciprocal partnerships that foster authentic participation, stating that they can build the capacities of those involved and lead to mutually transformative partnerships.

These foundational writings reveal the roles within democratically engaged partnerships to include collaborator, solution generator, knowledge producer, willing participant in problem solving, co-creator, co-learner, and co-educator. They also portray the processes of democratically engaged partnerships to be inclusion, collaboration, reciprocation, transformation, power diffusion, and knowledge generation. Amongst the Democratic Engagement White Paper, Kellogg Report, and work on mutually transformative partnerships, not one provides an explanation for how roles and processes indicative of democratically engaged partnerships come to be embraced.

Pertaining to research on community-university partnerships germane to democratic engagement, there is ample work on their constitutive elements (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Gronski & Pigg, 2000; Lin, 2008), the efficacy and sustainability of partnerships (Leiderman et al., 2003; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Torres & Schaffer, 2000), the redress of uneven power (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Mizrahi & Rosenthal, 1994; Wiewel et al., 2000), their transformative purposes (Clayton et al., 2010; Enos & Morton, 2003; Jameson et al., 2011), and the competencies and conditions necessary for certain partnership qualities (El Ansari et al., 2002; Enos & Morton, 2003; Mathews, 1996; Prilleltensky, 1994).
Pertaining to the broad status of research on community-university partnerships, Rubin (2000) calls for qualitative examination of partnerships so that their complexity might be understood. He goes on to say that though there are many claims that the new form of engagement differs from old notions of outreach, there is little empirical evidence of such. Democratic engagement is being studied but has only been recently articulated as a conception of engagement. More empirical study is needed on the mechanics of democratic engagement. Bringle et al. (Bringle et al., 2009) call for specificity within research on relationships between community and university stakeholders. This study seeks to fill these gaps. It will seek evidence of the specific ways community-university partnerships adopt the roles and processes of democratic engagement and specify divergent experiences among stakeholders.

**Relationship to pilot study.** In the spring of 2010, the researcher conducted a pilot study that honed her ability to identify democratic and technocratic elements of engagement, to practice data collection methods that are associated with qualitative case study research, and to clarify the research questions addressed in this dissertation study. (Dostilio, 2010). The pilot study investigated a case of project-based service-learning that was highly inclusive of community participation, incorporated a democratic learning environment between faculty and students, and sought to base its work on the assets and guidance of the community. Although there was a high degree of desire for inclusion, valuation of community assets, and a democratic learning environment within the case, the authority for final decision-making resided with the students and the ultimate product was limited in its ability to address the systemic issues of concern identified by the community.
The pilot study confirmed the necessity of having a cohesive engagement strategy from which disparate activities come so that small units of action (such as service-learning) can be aligned to larger community agendas. It also confirmed that the espoused democratic values and conditions of an engagement activity do not ensure that its stakeholders embrace and follow through with the roles and processes of democratic engagement. The missing element was transformation (Jameson et al., 2011); the stakeholders did not transform in their roles, or through the processes enacted. The institutions that participated were not changed in terms of their normative approaches to engagement. The pilot study informs multiple parts of this study, such as the inclusion of mutually-transformative partnerships as a necessary element of democratically engaged partnerships, the case selection strategy, and coding schema.

**Design map.** Maxwell (2005) encourages qualitative researchers to develop a design map for their studies. A design map is offered that outlines the goals, conceptual framework, research questions, validity concerns, and methods for this study (see Figure 4 on page 114). According to Maxwell, these elements integrate with one another to develop an aligned approach to research.

**Research Questions**

- Research Question #1: How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?
- Research Question #2: How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
• Research Question #3: How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

• Research Question #4: How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

Type of Study

According to Yin (1993), a phenomenon is best investigated using a case study when the aim of the investigation is to create broad definition(s) of the phenomenon rather than narrow, to examine the phenomenon in its context rather than separate the two, and to use multiple sources of evidence rather than a singular source. The adoption of roles and processes that is of interest in this study intimately depends on the context of the partnership. Such partnerships are complex relationships that yield multiple informants and products. Examination of these multiple forms of data is key to accurately representing the phenomenon.

The research questions driving the investigation focus on how certain roles and processes are adopted and influence a democratic orientation. Explanatory case studies are suitable for investigating “how questions” (Yin, 1994). Though experimental and historical research also examines causal questions, an explanatory case study is the most appropriate method to use. In this case, an explanatory case study is preferable to experimental research because no control over the participants’ behaviors can be exercised (i.e. how they behave in the partnership, what roles and
Figure 4: Design Map (Maxwell, 2005)

**GOALS**
To understand how democratically engaged partnerships are formed so that we know how to encourage people to adopt democratically oriented roles and processes so that we can enact a democratic, cohesive, participatory form of engagement that addresses injustice and contributes to a democratic way of associating for both our IHE’s and citizens.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**
Democratically engaged partnerships are community-university partnerships that embody the tenets of democratic engagement. Democratic engagement is a conceptual framework that values inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which academics share knowledge-generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving. (Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 9).

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
- How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?
- How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
- How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
- How do individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

**METHODS**
Qualitative explanatory case study:
- Purposive sampling: select a partnership that is vetted through sources that define partnership and engagement in ways consonant with this study.
- Information rich criteria: democratically oriented, currently happening, and having consistency of stakeholder roles
- Data collection: interviews, observations, and document review
- Data analysis: two-phase coding schema, CAQDAS via Atlas.ti

**VALIDITY**
Three primary concerns: representation of phenomena within case; researcher effect; trustworthiness of interpretations. Practices include:
- Close case screening
- Inclusive interviewee selection
- Triangulation of data sources
- Monitoring subjective lens through field notebook
- Member check interpretations
- Peer review of coding scheme, categories of themes, and findings
processes they adopt, what previous experiences they may have had, or what characteristics are found within their personalities). The case study is also preferable to historical research because the events are contemporary and the partnership participants can be interviewed. For these reasons, the most appropriate research design is being used: an explanatory case study.

Diezmann (2002) used an explanatory case study design to test a theory she had begun to develop that addressed students’ use of diagrams in mathematical problem solving. Her theory brought together parts of what was known about diagram use in problem solving and a model of instruction. This study proposes to use explanatory case study to further clarify the link between what is known about the roles and processes of democratic engagement and the processes of community-university partnerships. The study’s content is comprised of the roles and processes of democratic engagement and is focused on the means to acquire such roles and processes. As explored in chapter two, these means include peer-to-peer learning and empowerment (otherwise known as partnership learning interactions), individual competencies, and social and political conditions, which can also be summarized as reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1978; 1986).

Stevens (1993) expanded on descriptive and exploratory case study designs used to investigate a reading intervention program in 10 urban elementary schools. Her secondary analysis of those descriptive and explanatory data used explanatory case study design. The descriptive and exploratory data confirmed that reading scores were low across all 10 schools, even post-intervention. The findings also produced some ideas of why this might be. Stevens went back to the case data having developed propositions
(Yin, 1994) relating the low scores to potential causes. Using a conceptual framework called Opportunity-to-Learn, Stevens (1993) examined the causal relationship between a set of variables (content coverage, content exposure, content emphasis, and instructional delivery) and low reading scores. Her first proposition was that reading scores were low because of inadequate teaching practices. Her second proposition was that teaching practice problems could be explained by the Opportunity-to-Learn conceptual framework. This type of proposition building and explanation testing is at the heart of this case design: it is likely that there is a causal link between one or more variables (partnership learning interactions, individual attributes, and social and political conditions) and stakeholder adoption of roles and processes indicative of democratically engaged partnerships.

Evidence found within the case that does not align with the tentative theory creates a need to revise the theory (Diezmann, 2002). As negative or refuting evidence is found, the preliminary theory is changed to accommodate the evidence. Emigh (1997) characterizes the process of seeking such misalignment as negative case process. She proposes that negative cases can contribute to social science theory if they meet two conditions: a) the gap between the case’s outcome and the predicted outcome based on theory is large and b) thorough analysis of the case’s evidence leads to an expansion of the theory to accommodate the case’s outcome. If the gap is not large, one cannot say the case disconfirms the theory; and if there is not enough evidence to expand the theory significantly, the case is not useful. To build her method of using negative case to expand theory, Emigh (1997) draws on John Stuart Mills’ method of difference, deviant case analysis, and Lakatos’ framework of progressive research programs. She primarily
applies the negative case method to economic development, examining unexpected outcomes in some geographic areas when they seemingly have met all theorized conditions for a particular type of economic outcome.

Fisher and Ziviani (2004) use Yin’s (1994) language of explanatory case (as did Diezmann (2002)) to characterize the process that Emigh (1997) calls negative case. They provide a diagram to illustrate the iterative process such theory testing produces (see Figure 5). Yin (1999) refers to the contrary evidence, or negative case, as rival explanations. He encourages the use of rival explanations as a design strategy. For this dissertation, the first phase, or first iteration, of the process Fisher and Ziviani offer will be completed. The explanatory proposition will be revised at the conclusion of the study. Further testing through explanatory cases will be part of a future research agenda.

Fisher and Ziviani (2004) used explanatory case study in clinical occupational therapy settings to explain causal relationships. They state, “in situations…where background literature is able to provide a clearer direction for research, questions may be posed that beckon a more explanatory approach” (p. 186). In the case of this study, background literature is available that outlines both the roles and processes of democratically engaged partnerships and three influencers for how stakeholders might adopt those roles and processes (partnership learning interactions, individual attributes, and social and political conditions). As discussed in the previous chapter, these elements reflect the components of Alfred Bandura’s theory of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977, 1978, 1986).
As such, the causal relationship being explored is that of reciprocal determinism to democratically engaged partnerships. The relationship between these elements can be explored. Fisher and Ziviani go on to say that cases in which explanatory design is most appropriate have multiple variables that create a complexity not appropriate to be addressed through quantitative study. Rubin’s (2000) work supports this claim as it applies to the community-university partnership field.

Eisenhardt’s (1989) work in business and management builds a strong case for explanatory case studies as theory generating, but she also outlines some weaknesses of the design. In particular, explanatory case studies are used to examine complex,
multivariate situations. Thus, the explanations it shapes can be overly complex. Eisenhardt suggests that good theory is simple and that complex explanations may seek to include too many factors in their explanation due to the expansiveness of data that are studied. The other potential limitation is that explanatory case studies drive theory from specific cases to large phenomena. As such, very specific and narrow data drive theory. Eisenhardt says, “such theories are likely to be testable, novel, and empirically valid, but …lack the sweep of [grand] theories” (p. 547). Case replication helps to address this limitation, but Eisenhardt questions whether explanatory case design would ever produce grand theories.

**Sampling Strategy**

A purposeful selection strategy was used to identify a case that provides an example of an information-rich (Patton, 1990) community-university partnership. In this instance, information-rich refers to the abundance of evidence that demonstrates the presence of democratic and technocratic elements, specifically roles and processes. The case is what Patton (1990) calls a typical case: it exemplifies a typical example of a particular concept. As democratic engagement is a relatively new conception of engagement, there are few empirical studies that identify a typical case of democratic engagement. As such, this very selection strategy constitutes a contribution to the available literature on democratic engagement. The case selection coding included and noted technocratic elements because partnerships, by nature of their complexity, are not solely democratic (Jameson et al., 2011). Gathering evidence of both democratic and technocratic elements leads to a more authentic analysis than does ignoring a whole category of characteristics.
The sampling strategy (see Figure 6) had four steps, which is explained in greater detail in the following pages: a) information-rich cases were sought by selecting from among already vetted partnerships; b) cases were screened to ensure they were appropriate for this study and were willing to participate; c) elements were identified within the remaining cases that portrayed a technocratic and democratic range of features; and d) the final case was selected.

**Figure 6: Sampling Strategy**

**Close case screening.** To achieve the information-rich criterion, close case screening was used to ensure that the case exemplifies the phenomenon of democratically engaged community-university partnerships (Yin, 1993). Community-university partnerships are, “ongoing, long-term relationships in which each partner brings individual goals, needs, assets and strategies, and through collaborative processes blends them into common goals and outcomes” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007). In using the partnership as the unit of analysis, it is possible to
investigate the medium for community engagement without being distracted by questions of the nature of community. Rather than meander through the possible constructions of community, one can focus on the construction of the partnership (Cruz & Giles, 2000; Jacoby, 2003).

**Vetted sources.** The starting point for this selection process included two sources of vetted community-university partnerships: the C. Peter Magrath Community Engagement Award recipients (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, 2010) and the highlighted partnerships within a text on participatory partnerships¹. As determined throughout the previous review of the problem and supporting literature, there is a vast diversity of how institutions and stakeholders view partnerships, the concepts of reciprocity and mutuality, and shared authority for knowledge generation. These two existing sources vet partnerships in ways that are complementary to the interpretations used in this study.

The C. Peter Magrath Award bases eligibility for consideration on the degree to which the nominated partnerships exemplify the tenets of engaged institutions as listed in the Kellogg report (Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, 2010). They must exemplify transformation of teaching or research practices so that engagement with community is possible, emphasize sharing and reciprocity within the relationship, and base their work in the two-way exchange among partners to create new knowledge.

Each year since 2007, there have been five regional winners and one primary winner of the award. Potential cases were considered from among those nominees in the Northeastern Region: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania,

¹ The title of the book is omitted to protect the anonymity of the case selected for the study.
and West Virginia. See table 8 for regional and national award winners that were considered as part of the sampling strategy.

**Table 8: Magrath Awardees 2007 - 2010 from Northeastern Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Case</th>
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| 2007 | • Farmer Access to Regional Markets (FARMS), University of Maryland Eastern Shore (regional award winner)  
• Engaged Partners: Improving the Lives of Children and Youth, The Ohio State University (regional award winner) |
| 2008 | • Rethinking Urban Poverty: the Philadelphia Field Project, The Pennsylvania State University (national winner)  
• A Comprehensive and Collaborative Approach to Urban Revitalization, The Ohio State University (regional award winner) |
| 2009 | • Changing Cancer Research, Changing People’s Lives Project, The Northern Appalachia Cancer Network (NACN) at The Pennsylvania State University (regional award winner) |
| 2010 | • Health Sciences and Technology Academy, West Virginia University (regional award winner) |

The partnerships highlighted within the book on participatory partnerships fulfill the notion of participation by all stakeholders in ways that generate knowledge that drives social action. There are six partnerships from around the country included in the volume. See Table 9 for a list of partnerships included in the book that were considered as part of the sampling strategy.

**Table 9: Participatory Partnerships Cases**

<table>
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<th>Case Focus, Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Public housing –university partnership on environmental concerns in housing, Midwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Local community-wide partnership with university center for engagement, Midwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community-university partnership on environmental concerns, Southeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-university partnership on art-based therapeutic intervention, Rustbelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Multi-neighborhood-university partnership on environmental concerns, Northeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-university participatory research project on student success, Midwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Youth-community organization participatory action research project on LGBTQ youth empowerment, Midwest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After reviewing potential cases from both sources and consulting with established scholars in the field of community engagement (Saltmarsh, personal communication; Clayton, personal communication), cases from within the partnership book were determined to best match the unit of analysis for the study of community-university partnership. The cases within the Magrath awardees were based upon faculty and did not necessarily present an opportunity to investigate partnerships to the extent the book provided. As a result, the study selected from amongst the cases within the book to feed the selection process. For example, one of the nominees for the Magrath award includes a network of cancer research and treatment institutions that range throughout Pennsylvania and New York, some of which are recipients of the program and some of which serve as advisors who change involvement and roles frequently over time. This is too loose a range of affiliation to examine the questions of central concern to this study.

**First-line screening.** To further narrow the pool of potential participants, a series of first-line screening questions were asked to determine that the partnership was ongoing, to identify the core stakeholders of the partnership, and to determine the range of the stakeholders included in the partnership with regard to the diversity of their practice knowledge. Partnerships that were ongoing were intentionally selected due to the strength of case study research to explore contemporary events (Yin, 1993). As interviews are one of the major sources of data within the design, partnerships were sought that could clearly identify their core stakeholders and could provide reasonable access (geographically) to them. Finally, cases were sought that included a diversity of stakeholders with practice knowledge so that tenets of diversity and aversion to technocracy inherent to this conception of democratic engagement could be upheld.
(Saltmarsh et al, 2011). Based on this first-line screening, a number of potential cases were eliminated (see Table 10).

Table 10: First-line Screening Questions Applied to Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter/Potential Case</th>
<th>Ongoing?</th>
<th>Core Stakeholders Easily Identified?</th>
<th>Diversity of Stakeholders and Practice Knowledge?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>** Public housing –university partnership on environmental concerns in housing, Midwest</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local community-wide partnership with university center for engagement, Midwest</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Community-university partnership on environmental concerns, Southeast</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** School-university partnership on art-based therapeutic intervention, Rustbelt</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Multi-neighborhood-university partnership on environmental concerns, Northeast</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-university participatory research project on student success, Midwest</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth-community organization participatory action research project on LGBTQ youth empowerment, Midwest</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Denotes case was appropriate to be evaluated in greater detail. In two cases, the partnerships were no longer ongoing at the time of the dissertation, but were evaluated in the chance that the design could be changed to include a retrospective case.

**Constructing case profiles.** For those partnerships deemed appropriate to be considered for selection, the book chapters were coded according to the tenets of democratic and technocratic engagement (Jameson et al., 2011; Kellogg Commission, 1998; Saltmarsh et al., 2009; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Using the tool illustrated in Table 11, elements of the chapters that were democratically and technocratically oriented were identified, as well as those that appeared blended.
### Table 11: Case Selection Coding Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democratic Expression</th>
<th>Blended Expression</th>
<th>Technocratic Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How power is shared</strong></td>
<td>Respect for the contributions a stakeholders can make (Kellogg Commission, 1998)</td>
<td>Input is gathered but power is not fully shared or shared sporadically (Dostilio).</td>
<td>Defines university as expert (Kellogg Commission, 1998; Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(AUTHORITY)</td>
<td>Significant sharing of authority (Saltmarsh et al., 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td>One stakeholder group holds power and authority most or all of the time (Jameson et al., 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Power is diffused (Jameson et al., 2011)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicators:</strong></td>
<td>- Shared governance</td>
<td>- Consultation is used though one stakeholder group makes final decision</td>
<td>- University, alone, is entrusted with the majority of decision-making and agenda development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shared agenda</td>
<td>- Little intra-institutional/organizational learning (Dostilio)</td>
<td>- Little to no evidence of intra-institutional/organizational learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Time is spent listening and learning from each other (attendance at public meetings; show-and-tell during partnership meetings; etc.)</td>
<td>- Deficit based language – on; for; on behalf of</td>
<td>- Deficit based language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How stakeholders relate to each other</strong></td>
<td>Pattern of two-way engagement: “Collaborative model in which community partners play a significant role in creating and sharing knowledge to the mutual benefit of institutions and society” (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 74)</td>
<td>There are blurry boundaries or inconsistent roles that depend on context or external factors. Not everyone in the partnership has the same potential for participation. (Dostilio)</td>
<td>Pattern of one-way outreach: there is division of roles (rigid boundaries) between stakeholder types and limits to the full participation amongst stakeholders in every part of the process (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Some stakeholders, such as students, are relegated to grunt work (Jameson et al., 2011) or some, such as community members, are token advisors (Lina)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ROLES)</td>
<td>“Boundary spanners act as conveners, problem solvers, and change agents who negotiate the wants and needs of parties involved in the process of creating and disseminating knowledge” (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normative boundaries are crossed (Dostilio)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the partnership’s work is conducted (WORK)</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>A Pattern of some or all of the following Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Field agents” interact with community throughout most or all of the process – planning, design, implementation; “partners in discovery” (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td>• Partners</td>
<td>• Different situations or stages dictate certain stakeholder roles (sometimes consultants; sometimes full partners)</td>
<td>• Server-served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All partners co-construct the questions to be asked, the means to address them, and implementation (Jameson et al., 2011).</td>
<td>• Co-roles</td>
<td>• There’s an “inside group” of mixed partnership members that have more authority than general partnership members</td>
<td>• Consultant-client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Constructivist: knowledge is developmental, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated by partners (researchers and community partners).” (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 80)</td>
<td>• Respect and consideration for all stakeholders’ potential contributions</td>
<td>• Community has input on some aspects of the partnership’s work but not all. (Dostilio)</td>
<td>• Strict divisions of who makes decisions; who implements those decisions; who does the on-the-ground work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners work “with” one another (Jameson et al., 2011)</td>
<td>• Community presents university with a problem or university perceives a problem in the community; university produces knowledge to solve problem (Saltmarsh et al., 2009)</td>
<td>• Community has little or no input on research design; laboratory language (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positions the University as part of a larger ecosystem of knowledge production and public problem solving (Saltmarsh et al., 2009)</td>
<td>• Positivist: knowledge is rarely mediated. It stands on its own. A consistent pattern that knowledge is applied (knowledge is produced in university and disseminated to community) (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008)</td>
<td>• Positivist: knowledge is rarely mediated. It stands on its own. A consistent pattern that knowledge is applied (knowledge is produced in university and disseminated to community) (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gives authority for knowledge creation primarily to academic participants; and positions the University as the center of public problem-solving (Saltmarsh et al., 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How knowledge is used (USE)</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>A Pattern of some or all of the following Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systemic change paradigm based on exchange and implementation (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td>• All or majority of stakeholder groups are involved in defining the questions/issues/action; means to address those; how resulting knowledge will be used</td>
<td>• Some knowledge or action is mediated by cultural and social realities, others is created in isolation from community realities.</td>
<td>• Community presents university with a problem or university perceives a problem in the community; university produces knowledge to solve problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some knowledge/action is disseminated, some is implemented through (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td>• Systemic change paradigm based on exchange and implementation (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td>• “Field agents” deliver knowledge to community (Weerts &amp; Sandmann, 2008, p. 82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Using AtlasTi, each of the four chapters were coded using the codes developed in the Case Selection Coding Tool (Table 11). Democratic, technocratic, and blended elements of each case were summarized and used to create a visual profile for each one (see Figures 7-10). From these, the partnership was chosen that appeared to promise the most
democratic orientation of the group and the widest range of access to stakeholders within the relationship.

**Figure 7: Public Housing –University Partnership On Environmental Concerns In Housing, Midwest**

Within the public housing-university partnership (Figure 7) members of a university were approached by local community members who enlisted their assistance researching the effects of lead within a public housing complex on the residents of that complex. The partnership appeared regularly split between democratic and blended orientations in terms of authority, roles, work, and outcomes. There was little to no evidence of how the knowledge produced in the partnership was used. Regarding authority, a democratic orientation was observed in the partnership’s attentiveness to issues of power within governance, their reliance on consensus decision-making, their rotating leadership between community and university stakeholders, and an intentional
validation of community processes through careful selection of meeting locations. A blended orientation to the dimension of authority was exhibited in their choice of staffing the project (via director and coordinator) with university stakeholders. In terms of how the stakeholders relate to one another, the partnership demonstrated a democratic orientation in its valuation of both community and university stakeholders’ time and its efforts to make the motivations and assets of all stakeholders transparent. A blended orientation was observed in that university stakeholders had a greater role than community stakeholders in the project design and analysis though community stakeholders had veto power. Also, grant writing for the project was primarily the responsibility of the post-doctoral partnership member; the community curriculum being used was drafted by faculty but community members provided feedback on its delivery. The partnership conducted its work in very democratic ways when they established a system in which all members participated in new member recruitment to assure that new members adhered to the partnership’s principles. Its work demonstrated a more blended orientation in that community stakeholders more often focused on the partnership process, faculty stakeholders more often focused on the research project, and that the relationship between pursuing funding and building the relationship was considered a great tension, or what they called a “push and pull dance.” Overall, the knowledge produced by the partnership appears to have a blended orientation; they disseminate their work to the community, but it is up to the community stakeholders to mediate the study and the resulting curriculum so that it produces relevant outcomes. Finally, regarding the overall outcome of the partnership, evidence of a democratic orientation lies in the way the partnership balanced their desire to meet community needs and the scientific rigor of
the study; faculty work is concentrated at the local level rather than disciplinary level; and the relationships that have been formed have proven to be sustainable. A blended orientation was observed in the ongoing tensions between community needs and long-term research goals, and upholding rigorous research in light of community educational efforts.

**Figure 8: Multi-Neighborhood-University Partnership On Environmental Concerns, Northeast**

Overall, the Multi-Neighborhood-University Research Partnership (Figure 8) appeared to be highly democratic in most categories with a blended orientation in roles and outcomes. Some of the most democratic features included a “substantial cross education” effort to increase understanding of both research and community stakeholders about the work of the partnership, thus building the capacity of all members for appropriate decision making (pertinent to authority): the paid project manager position is occupied by a
resident; all members participate in the full range of research project phases (pertinent to how stakeholders relate to each other); an explicit dual mission of scientific inquiry and community organizing (pertinent to how the partnership’s work is conducted); and there is significant evidence of increased capacity among all participating groups and how they are able to leverage legislative change (pertinent to outcomes). Regarding the blended orientation, the most significant elements are that there is a steering committee that makes decisions on behalf of the full partnership (pertinent to how stakeholders relate to each other) and that students are mainly involved by gathering data and serving as interpreters (also pertinent to how stakeholders relate to each other).

Figure 9: Community-University Partnership on Environmental Concerns, Southeast

The Community-University Partnership featured in Figure 9 also exhibited a highly democratic orientation with some evidence of blended orientation within roles and how
the knowledge of the partnership is used, and an indication of technocratic orientation within stakeholder roles. Evidence of the democratic orientation is similar to that found in other cases, though some of the more unique aspects include the time the partnership spent in developing a shared mission and goals; the use of technology to make the partnership’s work and deliberations public; an overtly articulated list of the member’s assets and motivations for participating; their inclusion of students as full participants; and their ability to align myriad projects with the overall goal of preserving natural resources. In terms of the blended orientation, some of the community members perceive the university as having more power, the organizations from which partners come have great influence on the degree to which each member is able to participate within the group, and some people outside of the partnership perceive the university as consultants rather than equal partners with the other partnership members. The indication of technocratic orientation is that students are often used as manpower to collect data and produce project reports.

Within the School-University Partnership featured in Figure 10, there was a more clearly observable technocratic orientation than the other cases that were examined. Related to how power is shared, university stakeholders signified that they were participant observers, rather than partners, of the program in which the partnership was based, and community stakeholders did not voice any sort of learning or capacity building as a result of the project. In terms of how stakeholders relate to each other, university faculty took the lead and author roles of the community guide that was produced, students were primarily data collectors, and faculty were asked to participate in
Figure 10: School-University Partnership on Art-Based Therapeutic Intervention, Rustbelt

School-University Partnership

[Diagram showing the distribution of different types of partnerships, including Technocratic, Blended, and Democratic, across various categories such as Authority, Roles, Work, Use, Outcome, Technocratic, Blended, Democratic]

the project as writing/researching experts. Related to the partnership outcomes, the project scope remained narrow, adhering to the original grant application that brought the stakeholders together. Overall, the project was quite transactional with one of the faculty members quoted as saying, “I pen this essay two years later with humility and regret, reckoning with one of countless lost opportunities to work with community members rather than for them.” There were a few instances of democratic orientations, which include a recognition of the diverse expertise and experiences brought by all of the stakeholders, and amendments made to the research design based on community stakeholders’ input.

Creating the series of profiles illustrated in Figures 7-10 promoted three goals: to develop a rationale for selecting the most appropriate case for the research questions; to
determine a handful of partnerships that could be asked to participate in the study and the
order in which the researcher would seek their participation (should the first choice be
unavailable or uninterested); and to highlight areas within the case that would need to be
explored in greater detail through the case study.

Ultimately, one partnership was chosen that represented the richest cluster of
democratic characteristics among the choices and was interested in participating in the
study. Hereafter, this partnership will be referred to as “RiseNature” for the purposes of
anonymity.

**Description of Partnership**

The RiseNature partnership was developed out of an informal coalition of
individuals who were active in a controversial public debate about the potential
redevelopment of a private tract of land that was willed to the County (Plentyplains
Farm) into active recreational space. Citizens, university faculty, and agency staff
advocated for the parcel to become a protected natural area so that its unique natural
resources could be preserved rather than create a large collection of ball fields and
playgrounds. The public hearings, letters to the editor, and a subsequent decision to
designate the area as “open space” galvanized the coalition to seek further protections for
open space land that possessed unique natural resources. The coalition included an active
citizen who sits on an open space advisory committee for the County, an agency staff
person who had previously been employed for the county parks department and who is a
naturalist by training, and a faculty person from the local university whose research
interests include improving the governance of natural resources. Together, the triad
invited a number of colleagues and friends together to meet at Steamers Coffee Shop to
determine the next steps after the Plentyplains Farms protection.

From this grew an ongoing conversation to which people came and went fluidly.
The group recognized that many special natural areas were being lost rapidly due to the
County’s population explosion. At the same time, the County had successfully passed a
number of political referendums allowing them to utilize bond funding to purchase land
that was deemed “open space.” The group observed that many publicly and privately held
open space tracts lacked the land management appropriate for the resources found
therein. The local university’s support for community engagement was growing rapidly.
The conversations attracted an array of natural resource professionals, university faculty,
natural resource agency staff, and a few citizens.

**Data Collection Techniques**

Once the partnership was selected, a data collection strategy was used that yielded
post-hoc longitudinal data (Yin, 1993) that is qualitative in nature. These data include
partnership timelines, meeting minutes, resultant project documents, web pages,
published articles related to the partnership, telephone and face-to-face interviews, and
email communication. Triangulation (Creswell, 2007) was used to increase the
trustworthiness of the data. Though self-reports in the book chapters may have inflated
desirable characteristics of partnerships, post-hoc data such as meeting minutes and
webpages provided more consistent, or confirmatory, evidence of such characteristics.

Interview participants were identified by using the SOFAR model (Bringle et al.,
2009). The SOFAR model defines the stakeholders as students (S), community
organizations (O), faculty (F), administrators (A), and community residents (R). See
Table 12 for a description of the participants. As part of the telephone conversation with primary stakeholders, a request for additional interviewees was introduced. This request represents the use of snowball sampling to determine the full cast of people to be interviewed (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990).

**Table 12: SOFAR Matrix of Interviewees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Interviewee Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(S) Students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(O) Organization Staff</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) Faculty</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Administrators</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) Residents/Citizens</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semi-structured interviews were conducted via individual and telephone formats. See Table 13 for a matrix that associates the research questions of interest to this study with the interview questions that were asked and observations made.

**Table 13: Interview Question & Observation By Research Question**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theoretical Considerations and Contributions from the Literature</th>
<th>Interview Questions and accompanying Prompts</th>
<th>Observations or Document Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ #1</td>
<td>Inclusion, collaboration, reciprocation, transformation, power diffusion, and knowledge generation are the processes that animate democratically engaged partnerships (Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton, 2009)</td>
<td>Who set the expectations for how you would work together? How did you decide how RiseNature would work together? In follow-up interviews, after processes have been counted in the minutes and observed in the meetings, use specific examples to ask, how did the group decide to do X? Who initiated X? How did you introduce the idea of X to the others?</td>
<td>The roles that stakeholders of democratically engaged partnerships include collaborator, solution generator, knowledge producer, willing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ #2</th>
<th>Social and political ecologies of the partnering institutions (Enos and Morton, 2003) i.e. having political and opinion leaders who do not oppose the work of the collaboration (Mattessich, 2001)</th>
<th>Tell me about your org/office/company/personal interest in preserves. How does your org/office/company help or hinder your participation in the RiseNature?</th>
<th>Review Wiki for origins of partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Readiness” at the institution for fostering community engagement and partnerships (Furco, 2002; Holland, 1997; Ramaley, 2000)</td>
<td>What was going on in Rise County that created a need for RiseNature?</td>
<td>What are some of the critical moments in RiseNature becoming RiseNature? Why were they important?</td>
<td>Review of Wiki for financial and human resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A climate of available financial and human resources is necessary for the successful operation of collaborations. (Mattessich, 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ #3</td>
<td>Emergent trust that enables the navigation of risk (Enos and Morton, 2003)</td>
<td>How did you build trust with the other members of RiseNature? What risks have you taken together?</td>
<td>Observation at meetings for who is looked to for decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The process of empowerment is intentionally used to build the capacity of partnership members through the diffusion of power (Prilleltensky, 1994; Wiewel, Gaffikin, &amp; Morrisey, 2000)</td>
<td>Describe how RiseNature members typically make decisions that affect the partnership and its work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The members of the partnership assist each other in building the necessary capacity to engage fully with the partnership (Kirby, 2010)</td>
<td>Observation at meetings for sharing of resources (information, network connections)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ #4</td>
<td>Personal capacities: asserting displeasure, providing emotional support and managing conflict (Bringle and Hatcher, 2002)</td>
<td>How do RiseNature members typically work together? (repeated from RQ#1) What makes that way of working together possible?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partnership Competences: educational competencies (ability to plan educational programs), b) partnership fostering experience (prior</td>
<td>What helpful personal characteristics do you bring to RiseNature? How have you helped RiseNature to move forward?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
experience building and nurturing partnerships), c) community involvement skills (ability to convene and organize target communities), d) change agents proficiencies, and e) strategic and management capacities (policy and budget implementation) (El Ansari, 2002)

Tell me about some of the other partnerships you’ve been involved in. How are they similar to RiseNature? How are they different?

Disposition of publicness as a desire to make one’s work open, civic, inclusive, and pragmatic (Matthews, 1996)

How did you become involved in RiseNature? What keeps you involved in RiseNature?

Organizationally-literate individuals who are members of the partnership (Enos and Morton, 2003)

Review of meeting minutes for partners who contribute insights related to navigating institutions (university, municipalities, cbo’s, citizen interest groups)

Observation at meetings for partners who contribute these insights

Faculty who have experienced a change in identity from pedagogue to that of community member or citizen servant (enos and Morton, 2003)

How did you become involved in RiseNature? What keeps you involved in RiseNature?

In the case of RiseNature, this is complicated by faculty participants also being Rise residents – Enos and Morton assume the two identities are distinct – in this case, it isn’t so.

Interviews occurring via individual and telephone formats were recorded and transcribed. Follow-up conversations with participants occurred as needed to clarify their narratives and case details and to delve deeper into the ways they understood, acquired, and embraced the roles and processes of democratically engaged partnerships. Over a period of three months, four partnership meetings were observed and one partnership meeting was recorded and listened to remotely. Detailed notes were taken on these meetings, and the patterns of interaction between members were mapped via diagram.
Data Analysis Procedures

Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) included the use of Atlas ti 6.2 as the primary code-and-retrieve program and CMaps as the primary conceptual network builder (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During the first phase of coding, provisional and in vivo coding were used (Saldana, 2009) to reduce the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). During the second phase of coding, data were further reduced to identify themes that highlighted particular elements of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1978; 1986) present within the members’ experiences. Once shared themes were established, they were compared with a priori categories of information (Maxwell, 2005) related to the emergence and application of roles and processes so that the research questions could be answered.

Using provisional coding (Saldana, 2009), a list of pre-determined codes was established that reflected the categories of information sought in the research questions and proposed within community engagement literature. See Table 14.

Table 14: Provisional Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roles</td>
<td>Evidence of an individual member taking on certain behavior pattern or function such as co-creator, co-educator, collaborator, knowledge producer, and solution generator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-creator</td>
<td>Shares creative duties with others. Not the sole initiator of a solution, idea, or process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-educator</td>
<td>Provides information or learning experiences that helps colleagues to learn. Not the sole educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Exhibiting behaviors that encourage collaboration (working together to realize a mutually decided goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Producer</td>
<td>Someone who synthesizes experiences, ideas, and expertise to generate new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution Generator</td>
<td>Participates in problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Evidence of the group taking on a series of actions or operations that yield democratic processes such as collaboration, inclusion, knowledge generation, power diffusion, reciprocation, solution generation, and transformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics</td>
<td>Respective Definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>The act of working together to realize a mutually defined goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td>The act of including multiple voices or participation by multiple partnership members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Generation</td>
<td>The act of synthesizing experiences, ideas, and expertise to generate new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Diffusion</td>
<td>The act of yielding authority, seeking input, or otherwise distributing decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocation</td>
<td>The act of exchanging benefits, favors, and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>The act of changing the current circumstances or way of being to something different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Partnership Competencies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting Displeasure</td>
<td>Ability of a member to express to another member unhappiness with a particular happening, decision, or event within a partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Agent Proficiencies</td>
<td>A member's ability to enact change processes within the partnership and the larger community that is affected by the partnership's work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Involvement Skills</td>
<td>A member's ability to convene and organize target communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Conflict</td>
<td>Ability of a member to mediate conflict or disagreement within the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Fostering Experience</td>
<td>A member's prior experience building and nurturing partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing emotional support</td>
<td>Ability of a member to support another member emotionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic and management capacities</td>
<td>A member's experience with policy and budget implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational conditions</strong></td>
<td>Happenings within a member's organization that facilitate or challenge his or her work in the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social conditions</strong></td>
<td>Happenings within the social environment that facilitate or challenge the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political conditions</strong></td>
<td>Happenings within the political environment that facilitate or challenge the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer to Peer Learning</strong></td>
<td>Includes behaviors such as empowerment and modeling between members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>When members assist each other in building the necessary capacity to engage fully with the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>Illustrating (explicitly or implicitly) appropriate partnership behaviors for other members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then, in vivo coding (2009) was used to document participant descriptions of significant characteristics that were present within their experiences that did not fit any of the pre-determined provisional codes. These codes included publicness (a desire to make one’s work open, civic, inclusive, and pragmatic) and shared learning experience (an organized and structured learning experience that many or most of the partnership)
members shared). People who have a disposition of publicness seek partnerships so that their work is integrated in a public process).

During the second phase of coding (Saldana, 2009), the data were further reduced to those elements within reciprocal determinism that were most prevalent within the stakeholders’ experiences.

**Consideration of Ethical Issues**

Depth of relationships, informed consent, and confidentiality are the central ethical issues faced in this study. Because the case chosen to study was a distance from the researcher’s location, a variety of means to continue to collect data, such as Skype, conference call, and email were considered. Striking a balance between face-to-face, video, voice, and asynchronous contact was important so that relationships could be developed with partnership members that accurately represented their experiences of the partnership. To achieve this, the anticipated means of data collection were greatly reduced to face-to-face visits, observation of meetings, one telephone call, and very few email exchanges. In total, 31 days were spent in situ with partnership members.

Pertaining to informed consent, all guidance provided by the Duquesne University Internal Review Board was followed through verbal and written summary of interview participant’s rights, benefits, and costs. Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time and would be given a copy of the study upon request at no cost.

All identifying information was stripped from interview transcripts and pseudonyms were assigned to partnership members, the partnership itself, and those locations, events, and references that could possibly identify the partnership.
Monitoring the Subjective Lens

Being mindful of the subjective lens the researcher brings to her qualitative work allowed for the identification of the ways in which bias could affect the interpretation of case data as well as harness unique insights that enrich the interpretation of case data (Glesne, 2006). Three aspects of the researcher’s identity could conceivably comprise the subjective lens: the researcher is a first-generation college student; has a public orientation (Mathews, 1996); and directs academic community engagement initiatives at a mid-size urban university.

The researcher writes, “I have had thoughts and opinions about access to higher education and the legitimacy of knowledge that lives outside of the academy even before I was a college student myself. My grandparents raised me; though not college educated, my grandfather receive highly specialized training in the military and worked in the engineering sector for many years. He was a truck driver for the last eighteen of his working years. I have many memories of accompanying him as he dealt with a myriad of professionals (in the fields of health, banking, government, etc.) who clearly underestimated his ability to join them at their intellectual level. For as long as I can remember, I have understood the difference between doing with and doing for (Jameson et al., 2011). Through this identity, I bring an appreciation for the world of higher education and a desire to see non-academic knowledge honored and considered in the solutions partnerships produce for society.

I now live in a way that situates me deeply in my community. When we bought our home, my husband and I sought a location in which we would have diverse neighbors who formed a community. I participate in many civic activities, such as attending town
hall meetings, working on neighborhood task forces, reading and posting to a “concerned neighbors” list serve, serving on the board of our local community and economic development organization, and other public activities. Mathews refers to this orientation as publicness (1996). Through this identity, I preference working styles that are inclusive, public, connected to various networks, and problem-oriented.

I have no doubt that this life experience and personal orientation brought me into my career as an engagement practitioner. I currently direct academic community engagement initiatives (such as service-learning and broad academic-community partnerships) at a university. I am continually seeking to diminish the space between the work of our academy and the work of our communities. As a result, I began to ask questions of myself and of my work that I did not have the skills to answer. I now add to my professional identity the role of researcher. I see this as a co-role: scholar-practitioner. Through this identity, I am intimately familiar with the mechanics and potential of community-university partnerships, and I am inclined to value those that bring academic and community members into the same sphere of influence.”

Validity

Validity or trustworthiness (Glesne, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994) amongst the findings was sought (Creswell, 2007). The primary validity concerns for this study were appropriate representation of the phenomenon within the case, researcher effect, and trustworthiness of interpretation.

Miles and Huberman (1994) identify various pitfalls of misrepresentation (p. 264). Among these, the pitfall of generalizing from non-representative experiences is of concern to this study. There are two levels at which non-representation may have
occurred: in the case selection and in the interviewee selection. The case selection process was structured to include two vetting points: the first was to select from among previously vetted cases in which the elements of democratic engagement and mutual transformation were present; the second was in the initial coding of the democratic and technocratic elements of the array of potential cases so that they could be organized along a continuum. In doing so, the likelihood was increased that a case that is democratically oriented was chosen while acknowledging there would still be technocratic elements present. The researcher was intentional about including within the interviewees some individuals who appeared to be at the periphery of the partnership or seemed to have very different experiences of the partnership process (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Researcher effect is of concern because the very presence of a researcher may have indicated to participants that their partnership was an exemplar of democratic engagement and they may have wanted to reinforce this notion in their remarks. The study was introduced in ways that emphasized the unique roles and processes of the particular case but did not position it as an exemplar of any framework. Data sources were triangulated, using multiple interviewees and multiple documents (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Glesne, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The trustworthiness of interpretations was enhanced in three ways: monitoring the researcher’s subjective lens, member checking the interpretations, and utilizing peer review throughout the process. The researcher observed the misleading and unique insights the subjective lens provided by carefully noting her emotional responses to information presented in interviews and document review and by recording these moments in the field journal (Glesne, 2006). The interpretations of the data were shared
with the members of the study for their review and comment (Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Finally, peer review was utilized by working with the members of the dissertation committee throughout the study to review coding schemes, categories of themes, and interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Glesne, 2006).

Summary

In summary, the study design described here uses an explanatory case study design to qualitatively investigate a democratically engaged community-university partnership. Resulting data will inform our understanding of the ways in which stakeholders adopt the roles and processes of democratic engagement. In doing so, this knowledge will encourage practices that encourage and foster democratic engagement between communities and universities.
Chapter Four: Findings

This study sought evidence of the ways that three determinants (conditions, partnership learning interactions, and stakeholder attributes) reciprocally interacted to explain the adoption of democratic processes and roles within a community-university partnership. Data sources included interviews, observations, and document review. Data were analyzed in two phases. In the first phase, provisional and in vivo coding reduced the abundant data. During the second phase of coding, data were further reduced to identify themes that highlighted particular elements of reciprocal determinism present within the members’ experiences. Once shared themes were established, they were compared with a priori categories of information related to the emergence and application of roles and processes so that the research questions could be answered. The resulting findings are described here aligned with the explanatory proposition driving the study and its resultant research questions:

- Explanatory Proposition: The interaction between conditions external to the partnership, individual stakeholder attributes, and shared learning experiences will facilitate a partnership’s adoption of processes and roles indicative of democratically engaged community-university partnerships.
  - Research Question #1: How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?
  - Research Question #2: How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
Research Question #3: How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

Research Question #4: How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

This chapter will present these data in six sections. In the first section, characteristics of the case will be revisited and the stakeholders affiliated with the partnership will be described. The second section will address the first research question by identifying the processes and roles described or demonstrated by partnership members. The third section will address the second research question by portraying the conditions present in which these processes and roles emerged. The fourth section will address the third research question by delivering an overview of how partnership members learned about the partnership and its general conduct. The fifth section will address the fourth research question by illustrating the individual member attributes partners feel are hallmark of their participation and offering a typology of partnership members that illustrates observed groupings of characteristics typical amongst participants. The sixth and final section will exhibit data related to the theme of leadership, a theme that cuts across all of the other sections.

**Description of the Case**

**Formalization of the partnership.** RiseNature grew out of a controversial issue surrounding the usage of open space land called Plentyplains Farms. After a period of
informal conversations in which colleagues and friends gathered to discuss opportunities for action, they began to formalize their group.

After a period of dialogue, the group appointed as its chair people two university faculty. Although the group encompassed a much broader range of participants and did not originate from the university, they felt that the Plentyplains Farms issue led some decision-makers to believe that the citizens associated with the pro-open space argument were politically biased. The group felt that by choosing university faculty as chair people, their work would be seen as more neutral and less biased. Their conversations outgrew Steamers coffee shop and they decided to move their meetings to a location on campus (located across a four-lane byway from the coffee shop). There, they formalized their meeting schedule, choosing bi-weekly meetings (two times per month), and built a Wiki space to manage their agendas and to house their meeting minutes.

They chose to name themselves a partnership and developed a mission: “The mission of the [RiseNature] Partnership is to organize and provide resources to identify ecologically valuable, publicly owned open spaces within [the] County and to build capacity for appropriate management and long-term stewardship of those areas (Partnership Wikispace, 2010).” To achieve this mission, the partnership has been meeting for four years, twice per month. It has developed a means by which public or private landowners within the county can apply to the partnership to have their parcel considered for a nature preserve designation. To this point, the partnership has designated one nature preserve in the county that aligns with the partnership’s standards and has successfully worked with the city to support the city’s designation of a system of nature preserves that fit city-developed criteria for preservation.
The meetings are held in a campus building set apart from the four-lane byway by a row of exceedingly tall and broad-leaved trees. The barrier affords a quiet entry into the narrow parking lot that runs the length of a two-winged building that appears very similar to a corporate office building with a number of architectural details featuring natural landscaping and building products featuring local materials. The meeting room, on the ground floor, is a large classroom with moveable furniture, walls of windows on both sides, and a very modern and monochromatic gray aesthetic. I’m the first person to arrive and I’m sitting in a chair by the far window. A big projector screen is pulled down from the wall and no lights are on. The dark room, lit by the outside light and blasted by air conditioning, is a welcome change from the heat outside. Slowly, people start to gather, each recognizing me as someone who is not familiar and who is not in the group. Lights go on. Together, we begin to move the furniture so that there is a big, U shaped configuration of tables that seats 16. The projector screen is at the open end of the U. There is much chatting about side projects, other cooperative work, and small talk. One of the co-chairs comes in and sets up a wireless keyboard and mouse in the cross-bar of the U, directly across from the screen. The chair person is flanked by a co-chair, a county parks administrator, and 8 others. On time, to the exact minute, the meeting is called to order and the agenda for the meeting is projected on the screen. (Field Notebook)

Charli [chair person] and Phil [chair person] pre-assigned times to each agenda item and facilitate the group’s input on each item. The conversation doesn’t deviate from the agenda points and there is significant input and sharing from most members. There are a number of students here, an undergraduate and two graduate students. Also, there are agency staff and faculty. The faculty seem comfortable talking the most. One of the staff members here is taking me to tour the nature preserve after the meeting and he seems very comfortable providing input. There’s an equal amount of time looking at the screen to follow the agenda and other information found on the Wiki and looking at each other in conversation. (Field Notebook)

**Description of stakeholders.** A number of students, organization staff, faculty, administrators (from the University as well as the County), and residents (to whom the group refers as citizens) were asked to participate in the study. In total, 21 people participated in 37 interviews. Not all of the participants consider themselves members of the partnership, though the majority do. At the time of the study, the partnership
was solidifying a process by which the organizations represented by the members were signing memorandums of understanding to pledge their ongoing participation in RiseNature despite staff or faculty turnover.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into for the purpose of enhancing cooperation and communication regarding regional conservation issues by formalizing the participants involved in the [RiseNature] Partnership. (Partnership Wiki Site)

At the time of this study, individual participants did not stop using the terms “partner” or “member” to describe their participation in RiseNature.

Generally, members entered into RiseNature in one of seven ways: a) they were passionate about the issues of open space preservation and land management (coded as Passionate about Issue), b) they were university faculty or administrators looking for engagement opportunities or ways to expand the University’s engagement practices (coded as Looking for Engagement Opps), c) they were students who represented one or more partnering organizations through work and internship sites (coded as Work/Intern Sites), d) they were staff of an organization that had been at the table from the beginning of the conversation or were replacing staff who had previously been a part of the partnership (coded as Organizational Transfer), e) they were affiliated with the Natural Resources Institute and chose to complete their project obligations through work with RiseNature (coded as Project Site), f) they were people who had special talents that were tapped for discrete tasks needed by the partnership such as marketing, or geographic information systems mapping (coded as Consulting), or g) they were actively recruited by other members of the partnership for their specific affiliation with a key stakeholder that the partnership felt was needed at the table (coded as Recruited). See Table 15,
Overview of RiseNature Stakeholders Participating in Study Including Description of Entrée to Partnership, for summary of study participants. This table is repeated throughout the chapter with increasing levels of description relevant to the research questions.

Table 15: Overview of RiseNature Stakeholders Participating in Study Including Description of Entrée to Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Interviewee Count</th>
<th>Entrée to Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(S) Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy Gittin</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caitlin Coder</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(O) Organization Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amanda Butler</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cindy Feltz</td>
<td>Project Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jennie Jenkins:</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joannie Rush</td>
<td>Project Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julie Swinger</td>
<td>Recruited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa Pealen</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Hafner</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Green</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Townsend</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charli Tibideaux</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Katie Thoms</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leigh Kitrens</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Upton</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phil Frazier</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Administrators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David Greev</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leah Rice</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R) Residents/Citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kelly Normer (Citizen Activist)</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Boddington (Citizen Scientist)</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steve Lorry (Marketing Consultant)</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question #1: Description of Processes and Roles

The first research question asks, “How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?” The
data that address this question include the processes and roles that participants described or exhibited.

**Processes.** Within a democratic centered framework, stakeholders come together not as experts and clients, but as co-generators of solutions. This orientation calls for certain processes. According to the literature (Kellogg Commission, 1998; Jameson et al., 2010; Saltmarsh et al., 2009) the processes that animate a democratically oriented partnership are inclusion, collaboration, reciprocation, transformation, power diffusion, and knowledge generation.

**Pre-established democratic processes.** Evidence of some of the pre-established democratic processes was found within the RiseNature case, including collaboration, power diffusion, reciprocation, and inclusion. Each will be discussed in turn.

**Collaboration.** Collaboration is the act of working together to realize a mutually defined goal. In the case of RiseNature, the group typically opens a decision or challenge up to the entire group for discussion and problem solving. All members’ contributions and opinions are welcome, whether they are at the meeting or via postings to the wiki space. According to Steve, one of the participants who considers himself a consultant to RiseNature, the opportunity for all group members to tackle tasks underscored the collaborative nature of the partnership:

> I would describe their typical way of working together as very collaborative, definitely very hands-on, and it seemed that they came together as a group and whoever could take on the next task that was in line took that task on. Again, it felt like a group that worked well together. (Steve)
Similarly, William (who considers himself a full member of the group) found the partnership’s ability to leverage different assets and experiences as indicative of its collaborative process:

Collaboration really is great to be able to tap into different resources and strengths. Like I said Charli and Phil [the chair people] have been great, but the other folks that have been involved too have a lot of history working. It’s been really helpful. … We were looking at the strengths and where others have deficiencies and trying to match everybody up and tap into the resources that we all have. It’s been, to me, the word would be - it truly is collaborative. (William)

**Power diffusion.** There are instances within the partnership in which members actively diffused power (or the act of yielding authority, seeking input, or otherwise distributing decision-making). The power base is not held by one person or one stakeholder group within RiseNature, and they are careful to cultivate diffusion of both rights and responsibilities via in-person meetings or through Wiki usage:

It’s very fluid, there’s not forced process in terms of a project you have to work on. It’s more like “let’s get everybody in the same room and we’ll talk about what you’re doing and find the commonalities and maybe organically come up with projects to work on.” So, I really liked the democratic nature of Rise Nature. (Paul)

I haven’t always been in groups where there is a very egalitarian way of how the group runs. More often, I’m in a system where somebody is in charge and this doesn’t feel that way, so it’s nice to be a part of that and see how that works. (Peter)

Phil has called us a circle of friends - more or less. And as you can see in the meetings, we’re positioned like a round table with everyone facing each other. I think this meeting’s seating arrangements are really conducive to sharing ideas. (Michael B.)

I guess even if they have a good turnout they’ve always put it out on the Wiki space so you can actually report back like yea or nah and so Charli has been really good about giving us those emails and saying you have until this date to read this and here are what are options are, let us know what you think and so we’ve kind of used the voting way of doing it which I really liked because it’s sort of like the
times where I’ve felt I’m not informed enough to make a decision, I can kind of say, I’m going to say anything either way but if I do feel strong one way or the other I can say yes, I want to do that or no I’d rather us go this direction. (Cindy)

*Reciprocation.* Reciprocation is the act of exchanging benefit, favors, and responsibilities. There is a sense among some members that they participate so that they can gain some sort of benefit. As David says, “I think there was an expectation from a lot of people sitting around this table that, I’m putting stuff in, I’m going to get stuff out.” He later goes on to give an example of how that has worked for him and his organization:

> So I’m seeing a lot of return for my investment. My investment being time, a little bit of money, you know, I’ve bought snacks for groups or groups that are working out in the field. I’ve rented vans to haul people. I’ve bought tin for cover boards, PVC pipes, but very modest. We got this nice report back and I showed it to one of our commissioners…and he was like, that’s pretty good report, David. What did that cost us and I said about $100. And he was like, what? And I was like well, it was all student based. It was all professor instruction time and I bought about $100 worth of supplies and he was like, that’s cheap consultant work. I said really cheap consultant work considering the time, 2,000 hours for $100. You know, it’s awesome. (David)

The process of reciprocation has also been amplified as the partnership has navigated the development of organizational memorandums of understanding (MOU) to ensure participation:

> I’m real interested in us figuring out what the organizations are going to get out of what we do. It’s not going to stand on its feet, in my opinion, it’s not going to be something that really establishes itself as something the community wants and something we can herald until we have something to offer. (Peter)

Speaking of organizations who still have not signed the MOU: So, I think the concern that [the MOU] raised for me and maybe for Phil is how much are we going to invest in them if they don’t want to invest in us. I’m conflicted about that since, it shouldn’t just be about ‘you won’t play with me’ and that sort of thing, but at the same time, we’re small and we need to make judgments about where we invest our time and if [an organization] really doesn’t see the value of being a partner, we need to think that through. (Charli)
Inclusion. Inclusion was also evident within RiseNature, though it was present to a much larger degree than the other pre-established democratic processes. The partnership encourages all of its members to participate fully in decisions and work, knowing that minimizing member input would defeat the purposes of the group. This is illustrated by David’s comment, “We’re all going to have a say and I’m here because I’m interested in this so why shut me out or shut me down… everybody gets a chance to speak. Everybody gets a chance to be heard.” This is further explained by Joannie Rush: “I’m so impressed with the variety of natural resource professionals that come together to try to identify and label these properties, I just think that’s one of those things that should happen a lot more often. People coming together that have a common thread and working through how can we save [open space land].” This spirit of inclusion is rewarding for RiseNature members and encourages their continued participation: “What keeps me involved is the feeling that my expertise is needed and valued (Michael U.).” Paul echoes this when he tells the story of being invited to sit on a review committee as a newer member of the partnership, “I guess the best moment there would be being invited to be one of the folks to review the Trillium Ridge application. I guess that kind of made [me] feel like more of a partner. I guess that’s the best indicator of a real partner or not.” As a result of encouraging full participation from both core and newer members, the partnership is able to leverage the diversity of its membership for a more full range of potential solutions. As Phil says,

Cause I do think we get a lot out of -- this is such an overused word -- but the diversity of people that are in the room and the experiences that they bring to the
table. God knows there have probably been dozens of times where I would bring something up saying we ought to be such and such and somebody would bring something up in contrast to that that I would never even thought of and I know that's happened to other people with more different perspectives.

Michael B. further explains the diversity to which Phil refers “the different backgrounds of members. I come from a scientific background, representing a local herbarium. Other members represent the university forestry department, the natural science museum, the county and municipalities, as well as concerned citizens.”

**Emergent democratic processes.** In addition to the processes predetermined by the literature, the partnership members articulated a number of other processes that did not fall neatly into one of the predetermined categories. These are also in keeping with a democratic orientation, but are distinct from those outlined previously in chapter two. As Phil Frazier explained,

> There’s transparency and respect, they are sort of the first two [processes] that come to mind, deliberateness might be another one and I don’t know, is that the same as focus, maybe focus is a less explicit word as deliberateness but more easily understood. So, we developed a quite focused mission, and while I’m at it I guess explicitness might be another word that I might throw out there which is related to the transparency part.

These emergent, and important, processes include deliberation, participation, trust, transparency, and consensus-seeking. See Table 16, Quotes Illustrative of Democratic Processes Not Explicitly Identified within the Literature that Emerged in the RiseNature Partnership, for exemplars of each of these emergent processes.
Table 16: Quotes Illustrative of Democratic Processes Not Explicitly Identified within the Literature that Emerged in the RiseNature Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deliberation</td>
<td>The act of intentional discussion or consideration as a group.</td>
<td>Well, we were spinning out of control for a while. But I think the core group, they kind of grabbed it and started smooshing it down and making it work and I think everybody realized that when they started doing that then, okay it had grown out of control. There were just so many ideas there and I would go home with about three or four notes thinking, oh this would be so good to do. [Members] started really refining everything and trying to come up with an idea for an application if you wanted to become a part of the Nature Preserve, setting up guidelines and then [other members] stepped in and they kind of smooshed it down a little bit more and made recommendations and said we need to do this kind of inventory and that kind of inventory; see what we've got, see if the property even qualifies, like that type of thing. (Jeannie) I just feel like I’m able to keep involved because there is a much more continuous dialogue. It’s pretty typical of the way a lot of deliberative bodies work. If something comes up and you certainly don’t want to try and vote on it today, what you would like to do is put it on the agenda for discussion. If someone is not there they can know it’s going to be subject at this next meeting and we might take some action, but I would think you wouldn’t want to try and act so quickly that someone that wasn’t there would not be able to have their say. You know, one of your partners. (William)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Participation</td>
<td>The act of taking part or sharing in the activities/duties/ongoings of the partnership</td>
<td>Anytime we’ve met it’s been you have all the partners at the table, to me they pretty much talk as one group, Rise Nature, there hasn’t been this I’m with the University, I’m with this. I mean people would voice their concern, as for me, they would say what their benefit or what their goal was, you kind of need that in discussion (Katie) There were one or two times I thought, hmm, this is just going to dissolve and fade away. But, then there were enough core people, more than two, that had such an active and ongoing interest and came to every meeting or at least sent something into every meeting and I thought that’s what it takes, it’s got to be more than one and hopefully say five or six people that keep something like that going. That group has it. (Leigh) I knew the University people were interested early on, really early on, I didn’t always know how the wheels were turning in their heads about how it was going to work for them but I saw the buy-in pretty quick, that they saw there was a way this was going to be useful. I really felt better, so that was good, but that wasn’t enough, the thing that made me feel like it was going to succeed the most was when we started getting buy-in from groups that could have been more</td>
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reluctant to buy-in. So, when the Wildlife Commission said, yeah this make sense for us to be part of this, when the Environmental Riches Program, because they’re so deep with inventory biologist, if they think it’s a good idea then I’m pretty certain it’s a good idea, we’re on to something good. Regional Land Conservancy, I’m not surprised that they would be in but they’re such a vital piece of this and they have, there’s a piece they can do that none of the rest of us can do and that is like manage funds if funds ever come in and apply for the grants that would be harder for some of us to do. I think those three groups are the ones that made me feel most secure that this is going to work, when I saw those three groups come in and sign on. (Peter)

I think it belongs to the people that have been participating in it. And I did say people. I didn’t say organizations. So, the people that are invested in it are from SE State, Rise County, the Herbarium, RLC, the people from different organizations that have really been coming consistently, more or less continuously, in helping shape the mission, the processes we’ve been using getting that first Rise Nature Preserve online. (Phil)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>The act of relying on the partnership and its members</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So, there are other people that worked together before this, so that trust is just there. I think it's a lot of respect for your position, where you come from and showing up to the meetings on a regular basis. (Amy)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I think completing some on the ground projects builds a lot of trust. (Lisa)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I think we started there in some sense because we knew each other personally and respected each other personally and I think respect/trust are kind of interrelated. I think that when we bring new people in we make some effort to get to know them on a personal level and another thing that shows up in these team books is teams are more successful when they know each other personally outside of work. I think we try to do that, try to get to know the, where do you live, do you have kids, do you have a spouse, where did you grow up, just those basic sort of get to know you kind of questions and discussions when new people come in. And even if we forget their answers, that’s really not the point. So, but no we don’t do that explicit teamwork exercises or trust exercise or anything like that. (Phil)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transparency</th>
<th>The act of making visible the inner workings of the partnership; avoiding pretense or obfuscation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>I think when we first started out, we knew what we wanted to do and everybody knew what we wanted to do, but we just didn't know how to say it and put it into something that the regular person could look at a Wikki and say, oh, okay, I see what they're trying to do. The language was just real formal and technical and that was one of my recommendations was to make it a little less formal so that if someone just stumbled across and they could read it and see what we were trying to do. (Jeannie)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
|              | I’ve been trying to bring a MOU forward with the City that Rise Nature has been wanting us to sign for a while and in order to move it along I felt like we needed to answer a main question about branding because it seems like the City is concerned about that main issue. It was good to be able to
ask that directly right at a meeting and I had sent Charli an email thinking she could just maybe answer it in an email but then it turned into a broader discussion. I was happy to hear that some of the other municipalities, or at least the County I guess, had that same question so it wasn’t just that the City was being kind of ridiculous in that concern it was validated by some other agencies that that was something that needed to be figured out. (Julie)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consensus Seeking</th>
<th>The act of arriving at agreement by seeking input by most of those concerned</th>
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<td></td>
<td>It would have been nice to have more people there because I think we would have had a greater certainty about how to move forward. It was just clear that we weren’t going to get consensus, rarely do we get consensus in one meeting if we’re going to do something. (Charli)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>But this organization, probably because we’re fairly focused on tangible questions of fairly specific agenda maybe is the right word and because it’s people who are around the table who want to be around the table, it’s easier to get consensus on the things we do or want to do. To a certain extent, if you’re not around the table, you may not agree with what’s going on around the table but the fact is you’re not around the table. (Michael U)</td>
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</table>

**Emergent processes not explicitly democratic.** Two other processes emerged that may contribute to the democratic orientation of RiseNature, but that alone are not inherently democratic: mission focus and leadership. A group that entertains a strong tie to its mission and uses that as a facilitation tool to assure the group’s efforts to move forward, may or may not have a democratic orientation. There are technocratic and autocratic means to marshal a group’s mission focus. In the case of RiseNature, in at least one occurrence this particular process was described in conjunction with the democratic nature of the partnership (See Table 17, Quotes Illustrative of Processes that Emerged within RiseNature but that are not Explicitly Democratic.). Thus, it is a process that endorses and furthers the democratic orientation of RiseNature. Similarly, leadership is not an inherently democratic process in partnerships that are not democratic. RiseNature, however, appears to be democratically led such that its leadership advocates for deliberation, dialogue, and transparency. As seen in Table 16, if these processes were
taken out of the context of RiseNature they might well be non- (or even anti-) democratic processes.

Table 17: Quotes Illustrative of Processes that Emerged within RiseNature but that are not Explicitly Democratic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission Focus</td>
<td>The act of determining a clear mission for the partnership and the act of returning to that mission as a compass for decision making</td>
<td>I feel like we’ve got a path forward and I think Phil’s ideas of let’s really tie everything to our mission so that we are clear and deliberate about what we’re doing is very sound management and so the more I thought about that I said, ya, that’s where we have to be. (Charli) I went to several of the meetings where they were discussing their mission and formulating that and getting an idea of what are we exactly and what are we going to be called and that sort of thing and I found that very informative and interesting. (Katie) Well, I think we’re opportunistic to a certain extent. I mean that in the best possible way because I believe in opportunity and taking advantage of opportunity and I believe to a certain extent that people create their own opportunities. I think this is an organization that came along at a time when this idea needed to be fostered. I discovered that there are not a whole lot of organizations like this focused on this issue. There are lots of other organizations that deal with protected areas or preserves or whatever, but there are not a lot that are trying to pull together the pieces that this organization is trying to. (Michael U)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>The act of providing direction or guidance</td>
<td>Dr. Frazier was careful to make it a democratic process. In fact, his role there in that meeting was not to have a vote, yea or nay, for that application but to be more of a collaborator. So, everybody evaluated on their own and we came back to the meeting and sort of decided piece by piece what needed to be notes for changing. (Paul H) You have to have someone facilitate all of that and pull information from all of the members. So, certainly keeping everybody on task and, you know, with the meeting agendas we’re going to discuss this and we’re going to bring this up for discussion or finalize because it needs to be done by this time. So, just kind of that. (Katie T) Our group has a leadership in the two co-chairs. This is helpful as they keep the meetings on task and move from item to item in a timely manner as well as facilitate actions among members. Without this gentle steering by the chairs, I believe our group would be less successful. (Michael B.)</td>
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**Processes challenging to the democratic orientation.** In addition to the processes consistent with a democratic orientation (both those that were anticipated prior to the study and those that emerged in this particular case), three other process-related themes
emerged which do not directly support a democratic orientation: concern with efficiency, deviation or inattention to democratic process, and getting bogged down in discussion or information. Each will be discussed in turn.

**Concern with efficiency.** Efficiency is the act of being productive with respect to producing desired effects. There is a general feeling amongst partnership members that this group struggles to be efficient and this may have driven the move to a subcommittee structure rather than a full group discussion every two weeks:

Maybe the one thing is I thought it would move faster than it did. Originally I thought, maybe I had my head in the clouds, I did not expect that it would go this slowly, that it would take this long to get to the point that we are at now. I thought, back then, I thought we’d be much further along. So that maybe was a little bit of a surprise or disappointment. As you get through it you realize these things take time and then it’s just, you just have to take whatever time is necessary. (Kelly)

I think moving to the subcommittees is about us adopting a structure that allows us to work more effectively with our numbers and with the time constraints that we now are going to have. So, I think the operating assumption is that the committees will do work in the interim and then report back during the once a month meetings. So, whereas before we were doing some work outside but we’re spending a lot of meeting time hashing out some stuff. I think that the committee structure now is around having people in those committees do the work outside, coming back and report and getting the feedback from the broader group about what they need feedback on. So, it’s a more devolved decision making structure. (Charli)

**Deviation from democratic processes.** It is also evident that while the partnership spends a good deal of time enacting processes that are democratically oriented, there have been instances in which there is deviation or inattention to the partnership’s normative way of being. When this happens, it tends to be very noticeable to partnership members and is considered anomalous:

*Speaking of the decision to appoint subcommittee chairs rather than vote:* That meeting was very strange. I don't know, I feel like a lot of decisions were made
[at today’s meeting] a whole lot faster than they usually are, and we are in such a push to reorganize. The summertime everybody is more busy. It should be expected, but not many people are going to be at the meetings. If we could have just waited until the next couple months to set it up, I feel like our attendance would be back up to a normal amount of people. (Caitlin)

I say I feel like I’m heard but sometimes, it’s like - I feel like [community stakeholders are] heard as far as when it comes to specific projects. I feel like we're heard when it comes to on the ground things and the process of the partnership. But that whole academic language thing. Sometimes when it gets into that I feel like we're not always listened to. The meetings are a perfect example of talking for two years about could we really not do this every other week [changing the frequency of the meetings]. And there's just hesitation from the leading partners on making that shift because maybe this is something that brings the university out that typical university role. (Lisa)

Speaking of RiseNature’s involvement with the city taskforce: One of the things that I was concerned about was [our chair people] were representing Rise Nature but they weren’t providing all the information to Rise Nature. That concerned me because in order for them to truly represent us we should have access to the information so that we can make comments on it so they can be informed about the opinions of who they’re representing. To me, in a lot of these things, information sharing and communication is really key. So that’s an example where they may not have liked me saying, this is public information, you all are representing us, it should be accessible to us and I don’t know why they were doing it the way they were. But to me they were and that’s the only real time that that kind of thing has ever came up. (Kelly)

Getting bogged down in the discussion or review of information. The final process that challenges the democratic orientation is the tendency to get bogged down in discussion or review of information. This theme was present especially in relation to the group’s process for collaboratively writing documents and finding information on the wiki.

I literally glaze over when they start talking about priorities down to the bullet points of how we categorize our priority space and what’s the weight and the wonder versus this. And it’s not that I’m not interested, but when all is said and done, we just want the place to be protected, we want people to be able to visit it, we want people to have a good experience from it, but at the same time we want to protect it so that people are able to use that area. So I think sometimes a lot of the academic members get so consumed by the syntax and so into the text of
things that they’re not realizing that we just spent six months going over this and we’re still in the same place. (Amy)

I do find [the Wiki] intimidating in some sense. There’s so much information up there and I find sometimes it’s hard to sift through it all. For example to find the recent draft of the nature preserve management plan. With the different contributors too that becomes confusing to me and it’s somewhat intimidating. I don’t generally use it for a link, except I definitely go to see what their criteria are and what their definition of a nature preserve is. (Julie)

This academic language that picks apart every word. Honestly I think that’s why a lot of people were lost in the first few years because you would go to a meeting and it would become looking at that sentence and how is this phrased and I think that’s left better to subcommittee people than having the entire group nailing that down. (Lisa)

**Relationships between processes.** Often when participants were describing processes or when they were observed, individual processes were not enacted alone. They were often paired with, or activated by, other processes. Other times, certain processes were referred to as “being in tension with” other processes.

- **Inclusion through information sharing, or use of technology:**
  
  They make sure that you’re on the Wikki site and that you’re getting the emails and that’s really a great thing, they are so good about communication so even if you don’t get to a meeting in forever they’re sending you the links to the meeting notes and kind of keeping you updated on what’s changed on site so it’s up to you to really take that step to keep yourself involved but they make it really easy. (Cindy)

- **Efficiency through enacting structure or use of technology**
  
  I think moving to the subcommittees is about us adopting a structure that allows us to work more effectively with our numbers and with the time constraints that we now are going to have. (Charli)

- **Transparency through the use of technology**
  
  …transparency in part supported by the technology. If we do something it’s out there and anybody in the world can look at it, we don’t care, it’s what we did, we’ve got nothing to hide. You might not like what we do, but there it is. There has not been a lot of round the back stuff…everybody knowing what everybody’s doing, thinking, saying and not worrying about that kind of stuff. (Phil)
• Getting bogged down as a result of inclusion, use of deliberation, or technology

(Speaking of members who don’t come all of the time or who haven’t been members for a very long time) It’s not fully defined what membership means in the partnership. Do they make executive-type decisions? No. Do they vote on things? Not always. What do you do about a person who comes in and causes a stir and only comes back two times and may have affected other people’s views about something that they wouldn’t typically have changed. (Amy)

It’s funny because everybody will decide that’s what we’re going to do and then the next meeting comes around and they’re like I was thinking about it, or somebody will bring [it up] and I still think we need to talk about this, or I think we need to go back to this. (Lisa)

I know for me if I’ve missed a couple of meetings and I come in and I’ve read up on the wiki I still need to ask questions and I feel like it might be wasting their time. (Joannie)

• Consensus-seeking through deliberation

I think they really do listen to what people have to say and they don’t make really quick decisions, they really let things marinate, so if there’s something that we’re really unsure about or we don’t have a general consensus it’s like, let’s keep thinking about it, let’s table that and let’s get back to it or if there is something that people get real heated about they say okay, I know that some people are upset about this but let’s put it on the back burner and at the next meeting we’ll talk about it again when everybody has some time to think about it or let us get some more information or let us get some more resources. (Caitlin)

• Trust through having pre-existing relationships or previous collaboration

I mean, honestly, a lot of these partners were all involved with other in other projects before they came together. There’s been new people to come to the table that we haven’t necessarily traditionally had partnerships with but Rise County, RLC, SE State -- we’re all involved in other partnerships together so I just think that history of working together involves trusting each other. (Lisa)

Roles. With the exception of the role of collaborator, members did not refer to themselves in ways that resonated with the predetermined democratic roles. Rather, they had other types of descriptors and exhibited other groups of behavior consistently over the time the partnership was studied. The emergent roles explored in Table 18, Quotes
Illustrative of Roles that Emerged Among RiseNature Stakeholders, are not inherently democratic unless they are roles that marshal democratic processes consistently. The range of roles leans more toward helping the partnership move its functional work forward (worker bee, consultant, learner, and collaborator); assisting the partnership to connect its work to the larger public (connector, networker, public pragmatist, and salesman); and shepherding the processes of the partnership along (wise elder, facilitator, and synthesizer). Again, taken on their own, most of these roles are not inherently democratic. When they are located within RiseNature, however, many of them do take on a democratic nature.

Table 18: Quotes Illustrative of Roles that Emerged Among RiseNature Stakeholders

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Exhibits behaviors that encourage collaboration (working together and working with diverse expertise)</td>
<td>That's why it's so neat because not any one person is really the foundation because each different person has different expertise and backgrounds. (Paul) I think we’ve got structure and processes in place and enough sort of core understanding of what we are trying to do and how we’re trying to do it that it’s something that’s beyond one individual and so that great because that is what we should all be aiming for at the end of the day. (Charli) Lisa is very positive. She’s always encouraging, and they have some really good experience they can bring to us because they have this stewardship strategy already set up from all of their preserves. So I think she brings to us this element of experience that the concept of stewardship can work. So that she reassures us, her role is like a little bit of reassurance that you’re not going off into some netherworld where nothing can happen, what you’re proposing can work even in these public agencies because we do it with this. (Peter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connector</td>
<td>Connects partnership to other initiatives and organizations</td>
<td>That’s another thing I can bring is what we’re doing statewide, I mean Frankstown County is really already doing it to a huge extent they’re already managing their parks. Other areas like Wilmington and priority areas like Wilmington and Southern Mountains this model is just so great to have and if anything I can go into those local governments and say get in contact with these folks and I can serve as a liaison and try to expand what you’ve done. (Amanda)</td>
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Right now I sort of feel like a lot of my contributions really just go back to the City, what is the City willing to do, where is the City at with developing nature preserve management plans. I think the City is such a basic resource in Rise County for wild areas that to not get the City on board is hard for them. (Julie)

| Networker | Connects people to each other and to partnership | Kelly is a citizen advocate; she’s all about networking because she understands because she’s been on other types of environmental organizations how important it is to get the politicians on your side. (Amy) |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------| I’m kind of a liaison between everybody there. I am a student and I work for David in Rise County Open Space, so I kind of work for both sides. (Caitlin) |
| Wise Elder | Brings wisdom, experience, and perspective to the group’s actions | So there’s always that one person who is the more rational person who is like we’re going too fast, we’re going too fast slow down. Peter Green is a slow down person, he’s very, I call him the wise man of the group …he’s been through a lot, he’s been part of these types of organizations time and time again, so he knows when things seem reasonable and when they don’t or when things need to be slowed down and say, are we getting off track here. He’s generally the one to point out, “I was reading what we wrote and I’m not sure that’s what we want.” I think sometimes they get so tied up in the language and people tend to see the big picture and Peter Green is like the big picture guy. (Amy) |
| Public Pragmatist | Considers how the work of the partnership will be received by the public; watches the feasibility of partnership efforts in regard to public application | Phil is the one who, I mean he’s sort of like the steady person, the most steady and consistent and he’s very into keeping things smooth, under control, he’s very respectful of people’s feelings. (Peter) [Peter] was just kind of like “what are we trying to say, let’s just keep it basic because other people are going to be seeing this and the people who are going to be seeing this are not scientists so they’re not going to know what some of this stuff means. Let’s not get so wrapped up in what words we’re using and think about the other people who are going to be seeing it.” (Amy) |
| Facilitator | Helps to bring about an outcome through guidance, assistance, or supervision; pays attention to the process of the partnership | So, on one hand I’m a member and have clear ideas and on the other hand I’m a facilitator. So, I have to really be very conscious of which hat I have on when I’m in those different roles. And when I do that I say “guys I’m gonna take off my facilitator hat and really put on my advocate hat”, because this is what I think we should do and that was a big learning experience for me. “I have to keep those things very clear in
I also tend to let conversations go on longer than perhaps they should more so than Charli does. She’ll be quicker to bring things back to point whereas I have a tendency to let people wander more and I’m not putting value judgment on either one of those approaches; I’m just describing some of the differences. Sometimes letting people wander is a good thing cause it leads someplace surprising. (Phil)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worker Bee</th>
<th>Does the work of the partnership; willing to take on tasks that are central to the partnership</th>
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<td></td>
<td>I would describe [some members] as worker bees and no particular expertise but sort of sponges, and it feels good to take them out and provide them the experiences and knowledge so that it gets passed on. Caitlin is getting great at that, she’s learning all of these bird and frog calls and she didn’t know any of that stuff and now she’s studying tapes and getting really good at it. (Peter)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I think the things that I’d do if I walked away or had other things that were more important or was unable to, they are things that you could find somebody else to pick up and do. So, I don’t have an overblown sense of my own importance in the organization. I like all of the people that we’re working with and I like what I’m learning from the experience of being involved in it. So, worker bee, to a certain extent? It’s a nice fit, a nice relationship. I don’t feel like I’m being asked to do more than I can do and I don’t feel like I’m not being asked things that are important to do. It’s the best possible relationship for me. (Michael U)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Consultant</th>
<th>Has limited stake in the partnerships’ everyday functions, is present to fulfill a particular task or project</th>
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<td></td>
<td>I was actually asked to help with some GIS and that’s the short answer. I’m trying to remember my first involvement, they were having a day they wanted to take GPS units out so they asked me to go to help with that. That’s my specialty, the GIS, GPS. (Leigh)</td>
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<td>I had an undergraduate class that as a service learning project tried to do some data analysis that Phil was specifically interested in so as it turned out the question was a little more complex than their training. They had fun actually doing it, they produced some posters, had some nice maps made, so it was a good learning exercise even if they weren’t able, as a class, to be able to put the products that he was specifically interested in but then I went back and was able to generate, fairly quickly, some specific products that he was looking for. (Katie)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I always thought of myself as more of a performing a service for the partnership than being a full member of the partnership. I could contribute along those lines and I think that’s my value, being able to help with the special questions they have. (Steve)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Solution-Generator</th>
<th>Brings expertise to bear with others in problem solving.</th>
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|                    | So, bringing my planning expertise - I’m an educational problem solver is probably the broadest way I can characterize my role in this department or in this curriculum or whatever for Rise Nature. Most of the people around the table have expertise in various areas. Mine is in planning and thinking through the relationship between understanding the resource, understanding the people who want to achieve something with the resource and realizing that you have to go through a series of steps to get them that far and there are certain process, certain skills and abilities and you have to pull those things all
Not all participants were able to identify the roles that they played within the group. For those members who consistently assumed particular roles, or for whom peers assigned them roles, this is documented within Table 19: Overview of RiseNature Stakeholders Participating in Study Including Description of Entrée to Partnership and Roles They Undertook. Members could also take on multiple roles throughout the study based on circumstances of each different situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner</td>
<td>Actively seeks learning opportunities within the partnership or takes the position of learner when first entering the group</td>
<td>My expertise is doing the inventory and drafting the plans because that’s what I was trained to do as a wildlife biologist. I was trained to see things, identify things, put the management stuff together and I like doing that, I’ll continue doing that stuff, evaluating plants, making suggestions. (Peter)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>And the faculty member that I was teaching with - I’d sit in on his lectures so I knew what the students were learning and what it was supposed to look like in the document they were writing. And these were significant land management documents that they were writing. So the students that I was teaching taught me forestry. (Michael U.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesman</td>
<td>Gets people interested in participating and interested in the cause. Builds buy-in among people.</td>
<td>I’m a salesman and I think I can take you out in the field and in a short time I can convince you that this is in your interest too. And even if it doesn’t appeal to you personally, I’ll bet someone close to you, your kids, your wife, your friends, somebody who means something to you is going to say, yeah, that is important, even if you don’t like it. (Peter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesizer</td>
<td>One who helps diverse views, information, and proposals cohere</td>
<td>Charli is the one that takes all of the discussion and distills it down to something coherent. Charli is a little more deliberate about things and she listens better and synthesizes better on the fly than I do so the “here’s what I’m hearing summaries” tend not to happen as much or as well as when I am chairing as when Charli is. (Phil)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 19: Overview of RiseNature Stakeholders Participating in Study Including Description of Entrée to Partnership and Roles They Undertook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Interviewee Count</th>
<th>Entrée to Partnership</th>
<th>Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(S) Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Gittin</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
<td>Connector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public Pragmatist</td>
<td>Worker bee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlin Coder</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
<td>Networker</td>
<td>Worker bee</td>
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**Summary of research question one.** Research question #1 asks, “How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?” Given the particular processes and roles exhibited by RiseNature, one notes that some are not inherently democratic when examined outside of the RiseNature partnership. This realization grounds the study in its explanatory proposition and resulting questions: what other factors influence the democratic orientation of the processes and roles within a democratically oriented partnership?

According to the review of literature, three factors have been previously identified that contribute to the ways in which partnerships operate: external conditions that surround the partnership, partnership learning interactions between members (which include peer-to-peer learning and empowerment), and individual member competencies for belonging to and building partnerships. The remaining three research questions cue from the literature and seek to investigate how conditions, individual attributes, and shared learning experiences facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes and roles within RiseNature.

**Research Question 2: Conditions**

The following data address research question two, “How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?” The conditions that surround any partnership may include social and political environments. Each participating institution brings its own institutional, or
organizational, conditions. Combined, these conditions can provide a picture of the circumstances in which the partnership was conceived and now operates.

**Social conditions.** In terms of the social conditions that surround RiseNature, there is high value for parks and significant concern over the disappearing natural areas. There is also significant controversy over the right way to use open space, specifically, active-use versus natural resource protection. The last important social condition surrounding RiseNature is a strong history of inter-organizational collaboration and citizen action within the region.

*High value for parks and concern over number of natural areas.* The exploding population and housing sprawl has generated an interest in providing park space. According to Amy, “[The area] is very family oriented so they want a place that you can take your family and do family things.” At the same time, there is concern about the disappearing natural areas for which the region is known. Caitlin explains,

> The statistics say that in Rise County 27 acres per day are converted from either farmland to maybe some other type of industry or from undeveloped land to communities and I checked that statistic half a year ago and its still 27 acres. Wilton is becoming a more popular place to live that the people who have been here for along time lived here were concerned about not have a green places to visit, hike around bike and that's probably what spurred [citizen interest in preservation] on.

According to Cindy, “Property is disappearing at a really fast rate so it’s sort of like we have to protect what we currently have and then try to grab onto whatever we can outside of that.”

*Open space controversy.* Another important social condition is the ongoing controversy and concern over active-use versus protection of natural areas. For example, Amy explains, “When people started finding out that there was going to be this nature
preserve classification there was this, well, ‘...we’re not going to be able to bring our
dogs there and we’re not going to be able to use it’ and so it was pretty clear that there’s
definitely still that fear there.’ David further clarifies, explaining the monetary issue that
factors into the controversy, “I also realize that public tax dollars are allowing all of this
and for us to say to the taxpayers, well, you know, thanks for voting for $91 million
dollars worth of Open Space Bonds, but you can’t come on any of the property you
helped to buy.” David goes on to recount the most recent controversy over Plentyplains
Farms:

There are some citizens who are very keen on certain things that are happening in
this area Park and Open Space-wise and there was a very contentious park
development plan put forward by the City of Wilton for a place called
PlentyPlains - there were a lot of strong advocates that it needs to be a natural
park, it needs to be maintained that way, it doesn’t need ball fields, it doesn’t need
community centers. On the other side of the aisle were the people saying, “hey we
live out here and I got to drive so many miles to take my kids to soccer practice or
basketball practice and we need something in this area” and it was very, very
contentious. A lot of public meetings. A lot of finger pointing.

These social realities: the disappearance of unique natural resources, the high
value for parks generally, and a contentious environment are also is accompanied by a
high incidence of pre-existing collaborations and relationships amongst natural resource
organizations. This was mimicked within the members of the partnership. According to
Caitlin,

I think all of them had worked together -- closely for some time -- before Rise
Nature. Not just the professors, but David has State students come out to our
properties - probably because ever since he was a director at Rise County Rec. he
also likes to have people get involved. Not just in the parks but open space as
well. I think a lot of the relationships were already established and the trust was
already there.

**Political conditions.** The political conditions surrounding RiseNature include
significant statewide funding cuts over a period of several years, public support for bond
referendums to buy open space property, receptive local legislators, a tension for agencies between providing statewide service and local service, and the reality of numerous municipal systems within the area RiseNature desires to serve. Combined, these provide a conducive, yet challenging, political climate in which RiseNature operates.

Statewide funding reduction. Since the recession of 2008, the South Eastern State General Assembly has reduced statewide spending in each of the consecutive four years, and the state is currently facing a 3 billion dollar shortfall in the coming 2012-2013 budget year. This reduction has affected funding appropriations to state and county agencies, as well as appropriations to the SE State University and available funding opportunities for other non-profit organizations, which include the natural resource and land management organizations involved in RiseNature. According to Cindy, the entities that are involved in RiseNature may be among the most vulnerable in austere budget times: “…this is my own opinion, that obviously the parks are some of the first agencies to get cut when budget stuff starts to happen because we are sort of looked at as luxury services versus other things.” This has a very real impact on the work of the partnership, and David suggests that “Phil tries to be neutral all of the time, you’ve heard him, he’ll fall back to ‘this is the mission’ and part of that I think is self preservation. [We] cannot do anymore with the budget cuts in the University, budget cuts in government, I totally understand: let’s don’t go jumping on this horse’s back.”

Public support for bond referendums. Interestingly, these budget cuts were preceded by and overlapped with public support for bond referendums that allowed the County to purchase a good deal of open space land. As a result of these acquisitions, the lack of capacity to manage those lands became more evident. David explains:
At that time Rise County was actively purchasing a lot of land because they had passed over $100 million dollars worth of open space bonds. At that time, they had no stewardship program in place to take care of all of these properties. They were really just buying up a lot of land and there were questions about what's the long term future of this land. I wouldn't say we were a big pressure in the community saying oh they're buying up the land, but I think it was more resource professionals started to think we got to think about long-term stewardship.

*Receptive local legislators.* Awareness of the land owners’ lack of management capacity positioned the partnership to seek the government’s assistance with suggesting the city develop stewardship plans. In essence, it helped to legitimize RiseNature’s plan to designate a system of nature preserves with management plans. The county and city governments were open to hearing from RiseNature and taking action.

I see the good work that the people of Rise Nature have done, for example, in getting the City council to require [city parks] to do the nature preserves. That was a big step and we wouldn’t have done that, I don’t believe, had they not pushed forward with the City Council and the City Council made [city parks] do that…it needed to be a directive from City Council because when City Council directs it you have no choice and you can say that we have to do this. (Julie)

*Local vs. statewide service.* These steps forward also uncovered a political tension faced by some agency-based members of the partnership. Many of the governmentally-based partners feel a tension between dividing their attention and work statewide and locally. Very membership in RiseNature could be called into question based on this tension:

I was sitting there thinking about Wildlife not signing [the MOU] and Charli was trying to understand the reasons why and I was thinking just think if [mandated nature preserves] happened in every county across the state, Wildlife is a state agency, they would have to respond to that. I mean, yeah they’re based here so it’s easy to respond to this and I’m based here but I live here so our work makes my world better, but our work doesn’t make, pick one, Bullers County which is up in the Northwest corner for the state, better, because there’s no direct benefit to Bullers County. (David)
This is echoed by another agency staff person:

The nature of my job as a statewide position I cover, sort of, the state and my job has changed a lot in the last 10 years or so, so we weren’t always as actively engaged locally because that would almost be unfair to the other 99 counties if we were just focused to heavily in one county. So, we tried to split ourselves very thin. (William)

*Number of municipal systems.* Even as the work of RiseNature is centered in one county, the multiple municipal boundaries can create a challenge. There are 13 municipalities in Rise County, each operating with a different set of norms and receptivity for nature preserves. As Phil says, “it would be valuable to understand how to work more efficiently with all of the different municipalities. It took us four years to develop one designated site and our city work has been long as well.” Not all of the municipalities share the same population expansion rate, though it is explosive throughout the county.

These political conditions provide a rich context for RiseNature’s work. Certainly, it is a challenging context, though there are some opportunities through a receptive government and public support for open space land acquisition.

**Organizational conditions.** Parallel to the social and political conditions that shape RiseNature, organizational conditions serve as facilitators or barriers to individual members’ participation in the partnership. Two themes emerged within the various organizational contexts: a) partners felt the impacts of their organizations having limited resources including staff, time, and finances and b) partners experienced widely diverse organizational support for their participation in RiseNature.
Limited resources. Limited resources within individual organizations affect the larger RiseNature partnership. As Amy observes there are implications for steady membership:

Especially with budgets changing a lot of organizations have quite a turn[over] so you have [organizations that] had a really passionate person and now they are just there to fill a seat and not active and don’t really care and are not being a part of it. That’s going to hurt the partnership, definitely, and that kind of makes me a little bit nervous.

If limited resources aren’t changing the membership entirely, they may encourage the use of proxy representatives. This practice has its own challenges.

People are sending representatives instead of coming themselves and so I think that’s part of it. David Grees typically comes but he’s sending these guys, [interns], because they’re completely capable and he’s got lots of other things to be attending to and I’m sure everybody is feeling budget pressures so its those sorts of things. So I think the challenge for us is, how do we keep the ball moving forward in spite of light attendance? (Charli)

Further, staff turnover or reduction has implications for the degree to which an organization buys into the entire partnership.

We are at the point where the Memorandum of Understanding needs to be signed or at least reviewed and new players come in to that meeting. Because …it has to be signed at the top, they’re not privy to all of this stuff. And they’re like, so what’s our role, what are we committed to, when we sign this what does this mean, you know, how much time are you going to have to spend, what exactly are we doing? And, I’m not, at this point, not exactly sure how I can answer that since it won’t be me anyway. And, so I’m hopeful it’s going to be signed by [my organization] but I’m not 100% certain it will be. (Peter)

On the other hand, limited resources can create an impetus for an organization to seek partnership so that they can boost their own organizational capacity.

I was able to contribute some, but at the same time be able to get some help from some people that were a whole lot more knowledgeable than I was cause my background was in forest management and it’s not in parks and recreation. We’ve done a good job. We don’t have to ever worry about this land being turned into a subdivision. (Jennie)
In those cases where capacity building cannot be balanced with lack of staff, there is a perception among partners that they must take their own time to participate, rather than organizational time.

I wasn’t getting paid, they already had someone there as their representative and my current manager was like I can’t pay you to go do this because you’re not really our primary representative, they supported it but I volunteered my own time. (Amy)

It's not like any of us are logging the hours that we spend at Rise Nature as work time. It's all volunteer. So, it’s really not work. (Caitlin)

In one partnership meeting, Joannie was observed introducing herself as, “Today I am here as myself.” This is representative of members taking their own time, rather than work time to participate in the partnership activities. Cindy explains how her participation does not neatly fit into her job role:

I’m usually pretty booked between doing programs for people or having other meetings so this is one of those things where I’ve had to make it a lower priority. If I have that Thursday off I can go to the meeting, great, but nine times out of ten there’s something else going on and it’s like, maybe next time. Because it’s kind of one of those extras my boss lets me do, it’s not necessarily in one of my work plans, ‘this is what you need to accomplish for the year.’

Diverse types of organizational support. The other theme is a widely diverse organizational support for member participation in RiseNature. Though almost all of the organizations that send representatives have signed the MOU, there is deviation between those that provide the time and resources for members to participate and those that simply endorse participation.

As Katie says, “certainly my direct supervisors are supportive of me being involved with that.” However, this is contrasted with a fellow faculty member (Leigh) who digs a bit deeper saying, “I think they’ve dissolved the Center for Teaching and Learning…who actually helped schools set up service and learning projects… When you
talk about the University faculty, they’re supposed to be engaged in research, teaching, and extension…It’s too bad that there isn’t support for these kinds of things.”

From an agency perspective, the same type of diversity is present. According to Lisa,

My organization and boss has been supportive of our participation. I am allowed to commit some of my organizational time to the partnership. As we work on our organizations specific properties it does add more value and resources to our organization. On the other hand we also are able to learn from the efforts on other projects.

Paul experienced endorsement, but it seemed to fall on the corner of his desk rather than part of his core workload: “I was never really hindered by the Commission. I was given the freedom to participate and spend time on it. It was listed as sort of ‘you can cover this until we get [the other] position filled.’”

**Summary of research question two.** Research question two asks, “How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?” The conditions described here produced the RiseNature partnership. Some of the conditions promote the partnership’s existence; some challenge its existence; others may positively influence its democratic orientation; and some challenge the democratic orientation. Socially, the disappearing natural resources and open spaces create a need for the partnership. Politically, the lack of land management that was made apparent in the aftermath of the bond referendums also provides a compelling reason for the partnership to exist. Together, they provide the impetus for the partnership to strive for the protection and management of unique natural resources.

The number of municipalities, significant statewide funding cuts, and agencies
that are torn between working state-wide or concentrating their efforts on the county all provide challenges to the existence of the partnership. It has proven difficult to learn how each municipality works and to navigate those cultures effectively. As partnership agencies and institutions feel reduced financial support, they are challenged to promote their continued involvement in RiseNature. Similarly, for those agencies that work state-wide, their representatives find it a challenge to exert so much effort on behalf of one county, which is the focus of the partnership.

The social genesis of the partnership (a controversial public process) provides a strong starting point in considering the conditions that facilitate the group’s democratic orientation: this is a partnership that was founded in a social context of citizen action, public process, and inter-organizational collaboration. Politically, it is a partnership that operates within a local governance system that is open to its existence and, as such, RiseNature has found that interacting with the political system is advantageous to its goals. Organizationally, some agencies recognize that in times of financial stress it is wise to collaborate with others to bring additional resources and build capacity among partners. RiseNature has benefitted from this, and some of its members have stuck with its long-term work because they see organizational benefits arising from their full participation. Taking these conditions into combined account, it is likely that because the group operates in a controversial and public arena its tendency toward inclusion, deliberation, and transparency are facilitated. Some of its members recognize the strength in connecting the work of RiseNature to other organizations and individuals (exemplified through the roles of connector, networker, and salesman). Also, the sense of participation, commitment, and trust among its members is underscored by a history of working
together and their gain of additional resources as result of collaborative processes and members taking the role of collaborator. The very public nature of the partnership emphasizes the need to work with the public on public issues. As a result, the roles taken with regard to being public pragmatists and wise elders emerge.

Just as there are conditions that influence the emergence of democratic processes and roles, there are conditions that are challenging. The partnership decided to place two university faculty as the chair people of the partnership so that it would appeared unbiased in the social controversy of land use. While some might say this is neither inherently democratic nor anti-democratic, the decision may also send a subtle message that academic experts are the natural leaders of such collaborations. Politically, the desire to work effectively with 13 different municipalities may contribute to the desire to improve efficiency, just as the organizational conditions of decreased resources and lack of support may create for partners an urgency around efficient use of time. While efficiency is not antithetical to democratic processes, it can undermine the deliberation and inclusion that is central to a democratic orientation. In the case of RiseNature, the partnership has chosen to adopt a decentralized decision-making structure (subcommittees) to enable a more efficient use of time. The subcommittee structure enables specific task sets to be assigned to smaller groups of members who hold certain types of expertise. It is yet to be seen if this model will inhibit or continue the partnership’s tendency to include a diverse constituency in a deliberative process as a large group.

As a result of these findings, the various social, political, and organizational conditions can be said to accomplish the following: some legitimize and facilitate the
existence of the partnership; some challenge the existence of the partnership; some facilitate and influence its democratic processes and roles; and others challenge its democratic processes and roles.

**Research Question #3: Partnership Learning Interactions**

The third research question, “How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?” is concerned with how the partnership’s learning interactions influence its democratically oriented processes and roles.

Members of a partnership can interact with one another in ways that encourage and model participation. According to the literature, these include interactions such as modeling behaviors, empowering full participation, and teaching one another what is expected within the partnership (Kirby, 2010; Prilleltensky, 1994). Members of RiseNature exhibited and talked about a number of types of partnership learning interactions, most often captured as peer-to-peer learning moments and shared learning experiences among many members of the group. Although there were ample examples of partnership learning interactions, there was only one instance of a formal induction to the partnership, and this anomalous instance was not a full induction into the processes and roles that are indicative of a democratic orientation. Other than these means, members claimed to pick up behaviors as they went along or figure things out from the structures available to them. This third category of partnership learning can be described as individual partnership learning.

**Peer-to-Peer learning moments.** The peer-to-peer learning moments that emerged in RiseNature include a few instances of members intentionally encouraging
another member to participate fully, frequent informal orientations given in situations where one organizational staff member is readying another staff member to take her place, and one instance of an attempt to formally induct someone into the partnership.

*Member to member empowerment.* One example most powerfully describes the encouragement of full participation, or empowerment. It occurs between a student involved in the partnership, one of the chair people, and an administrator who first introduced the student to the group. The student was actually hired as a graduate assistant to support the work of RiseNature through funding made available through the administrator’s center.

*(Speaking of being approached by one of the chair people and the administrator)* They were kind of like we want to talk about your participation in the organization … I got this vibe that maybe they didn't think I cared enough to be in it or that I thought that it was not a big deal. It wasn't that at all because I was doing a lot of stuff, but I wasn't necessarily coming up with new things to do. I wasn’t like oh I have this great new project or I think that we should branch on this and okay I'll take the head on this opportunity -- I wasn't doing that. I thought I was supposed to be there to take notes, make coffee and stuff things…I didn't know I was supposed to be an equal partner in the organization and they had me there as a graduate student. [The Administrator] was inquisitive about what made me feel this way and why I would think that and why I would be involved. Ask anybody who knows me, they will tell you that I'm not that kind of person. If something I'm going to do, I’m going to do it 100 percent, but I thought I was doing 100 percent, but apparently my 100 percent …I mean I had the whole plan of what they expected from me and I said okay, bullet point, bullet point, bullet point, I've done that and they were like we expected you to do more. I thought they needed someone to be the paper shuffler. I didn't know -- and I was genuinely interested and I wanted to be -- and once that was all cleared, then okay I totally can do this and if you want my opinion, I'll give you my opinion about things. It helped a lot because then I said I can meet those expectations and once I knew that it was not an issue at all. (Student)

*Staff to staff orientations.* Informal orientations that happened between organization staff most often occurred in situations where there was organizational staff turnover or the reassignment of staff roles within an organization. Generally, the outgoing
staff person who participated in RiseNature would recruit a colleague or speak with his or her replacement and ready them for participation in the partnership. It was not often that these informal orientations explicitly addressed the roles and processes that indicate RiseNature’s democratic orientation. Most often, the orientation included information about the partnership, its Wiki space, and the issues it was currently addressing. Sometimes, the informal orientation was given by taking the new staff person along to meetings and modeling behavior.

[My predecessor] was about to leave, so she was training me in the position that I was taking on at the County. Rise Nature was just one of those things that she basically said, as part time interns, we’re not required to go these meetings, but since we are basically the only Open Space employees, it would be a good thing for us to go and volunteer our time. So, that’s fine and I like the idea behind it all so it’s not a big problem for me to go, but just going with her for the first couple or last couple of months that she was with the county and see what kind of role she held while she was there which was kind of a supportive role at the County and speaking her mind when she felt obligated to do so or felt like she needed to say so from her own personal thoughts, but pretty much watching Erin and it evolve from there. (Caitlin)

Before [my predecessor] left, I was talking to her about things I wanted to do differently, where I wanted to go in my career and that kind of thing because I was interested in whole urban wildlife aspect of things and how to really connect people with nature and so she mentioned this group. She just started giving me a little history and background of Rise Nature and what it was all about. (Paul)

*Formal induction.* As mentioned, there was one instance of a formal induction attempt with a new partnership member during the time of the study. This induction was organized at the request of one of the chair people; and the new member was a person who lived and worked a significant distance away from the County that RiseNature serves. As a result, the conversation was held via telephone and consisted mainly of explaining the history of RiseNature, its current projects, what the new member could bring to the partnership, and the ways in which the partnership could engage the new
member even though distance would limit her face-to-face participation.

I think, Amanda, in part what we wanted to do today was just have a chance and I, unfortunately, missed you when you were able to come to the last meeting, so you’ve had a chance to meet Phil in person but not me. It was just a chance to talk through a little bit about what Rise Nature is all about, what our objectives and mission are, provide an opportunity for you to ask questions about what we’re doing and try to figure out how, [your predecessor] became involved in Rise Nature in part because she was a student of Phil and mine here at SE State to get her masters degree and then she stayed sort of locally and was just helpful in terms of being a local presence with your organization who could assist in the identification of habitat and species which was extraordinarily helpful to us. I sort of see this just as an opportunity to have a conversation to share some of what we know and given the fact that you’re an hour and a half away from where we are it makes regular attendance at our meetings a challenge and I think what you want to think about is as the representative from the Wildlife Promotion Council how can we best accommodate the distance that divide given that our mission is primarily here in Rise County, so just have a chance to talk that through a little bit. …So I guess we’ll get started off by saying what, I mean we’ve got a couple of different things, one is sort of our day to day mission which is really to identify properties that are ecologically valuable here in Rise County. To figure out how best to manage those, including creating management plans and to steward those and we do that predominately by trying to build capacity towards those ends. I would like to understand better what is, as sort of the person who is doing Native Species Toolkit, it sounds like in addition to some other duties, what are you doing in Rise County and how should we begin to think about your role in Rise County and then as it relates to Rise Nature? (Charli)

Preparing stakeholders to become members of a partnership is important to leveraging full participation. For those stakeholders who have not been a part of a similar group, informal or formal means to introduce the preferred processes, roles, and ways of being are important. “Induction into a markedly different group is unlikely to take hold without adequate preparedness of at least an entry level of attributes required by the group” (Bandura, 1986, p. 34).

**Shared learning experiences.** There were various, intentionally designed opportunities for participants to learn about one another, the process of the partnership, or the partnership’s mission. Specifically, these included workdays, some of which
consisted of days in which partners spent a day in the field together attending to open space lands. In at least one other instance the work day brought partnership members together for a day in which they participated in group discussion, engaged in field work at one of the possible preserve sites, and closed the day with structured and guided reflection.

_Workdays._ Generally, partnership members felt these workdays very important opportunities to learn from one another:

I think what they’re doing is important and the people that come together to achieve that in my book are important people and they know a lot about these natural areas and so I can learn a lot from them. Especially on their work days. (Joannie)

I got started in 2007 and somebody approached me who was a member of Rise Nature and who had been involved with some of the efforts to get more natural resource focused conservation efforts in our parks and she told me a little bit about Rise Nature and then she told me about a work day that was happening and so I went on that work day. That was a day long at Trillium Ridge and I really enjoyed it and tried to find out a little bit more about the partnership there and then I attended some meetings. (Julie)

[That morning] everybody was in the room, uh, we were doing stuff, we were going through this process, reflecting on what we were talking about…what we could bring to and what we could take away from the experience and then we went to the field. …All the elements of what we were about coalesced in that experience. Because up to that point it had been talking about organization, about issues, about how do we get the word out, how do we do this and what are we going to accomplish in a somewhat abstract way and that kind of turned a corner. Well we’d all spent the day out there together in the woods and I think it underlined the fact that we all cared about the same thing. (Michael U)

_Natural Resources Institute._ In addition to these organized opportunities for members to share learning about the partnership, there was one coincidental opportunity that emerged. Many people involved in RiseNature learned about democratically oriented processes and roles through an institute they attended separate from their RiseNature membership. For some, it preceded their membership, and for others it was a concurrent
event. Of the partnership members that have had the chance to participate in the Institute (17 of 21), 10 have done so Institute overwhelmingly agreed that its impact was significant and that they learned a great deal about collaborative problem solving, facilitation, consensus building, and inclusion. According to the Institute website, the espoused values of the Institute include communicating more effectively, opening the dialogue to include all stakeholders, structuring problems to reflect complexity and uncertainty, and negotiating to settle disagreements.

It is a training program and the main theme behind it is to kind of learn skills to do collaborative problem solving. It’s a 1.5 year program so for 6 months you do a week in different parts of the state and my class was great, and most classes are very diverse group of people, so we have people from parks, DOT, King University Energy, a couple of just volunteers that were very in the community and wanted to attend that training to kind of improve their skills and so it was an awesome networking opportunity and we ran through all of these role plays and real world examples of these huge resource issues that had to be decided on, that there were 5 or 6, or 7 stakeholders that were all coming from their own angle and a lot of different things so it was probably the best training I’ve ever been to in my entire career and it’s definitely useful. I use it probably every time I deal with other staff members and when I have partnerships with people it was really, really an amazing experience. Knowing that a lot of those people went through that same thing I think, okay that kind of gives a little bit of like, I trust them because they are defiantly going to keep those things in mind and you know in your meetings that some meetings are facilitated really well. (Cindy)

I use my Natural Resources Institute stuff all the time. It is amazing at the skills that it teaches, sometimes in a very subtle way and other times hits you over the head kind of way but that you retain and that you use constantly. (David)

I learned a lot about facilitating, because I never really had taken any formal training or classes on facilitating meetings, I just had been to so many and kind of did my own. (Joannie)

Conflict resolution was a primary focus. You’re usually dealing with issues that are controversial … How do you deal with people that might not get along or have preconceived thoughts about who they’re working with and then bringing them together and focusing on a common goal. … having to work though everybody has different goals, different objectives about how can you find that common piece that everybody wants to work towards so you kind of share in this common goal working for your own interest but also meeting the goals of the whole team.
Individual partnership learning. Of possible ways that stakeholders learned about how to behave in the partnership most did so by observation, participating in the structures of the partnership, and through the efforts of the chair people.

Observation. Many of the members claimed that no one told them what was expected of or from them; they just listened and picked up on the behaviors expected of them. As Cindy says, “It’s just that vibe that you get and once you get it the first time it just kind of continues.” Joannie feels similarly, saying, “I don’t think anybody every taught me [how to behave in RiseNature]… I think I’m an observer first, eventually I’ll start speaking my mind but I’m usually an observer first to kind of get the feel for…the dynamics.” William echoes this, saying:

I think it was more just coming to the meetings and sort of learning. Because I’d worked in several other partnerships it wasn’t radically different so I didn’t really look for anyone to explain it to me because I guess I anticipated the process or the format we were going to use.

Structures. For others, the structures set up (such as the Wiki and the meeting style) shaped their expectations of the partnership’s working style. According to Michael B., “Having access to the wealth of information on the Wiki has given me a good understanding of how the partnership works and the progress we have made over time.” Paul concurs, “I had some questions, but I also used their website as a resource and especially since it’s open and everything can be seen, if I dug deep enough I could find everything there.”

Efforts of chair people. As a matter of routine, the co-chairs try to “back fill” items in the agenda to clarify the history of topics so that full understanding and discussion can occur even for the new people. Phil explains, “One thing I try to do, when
new folks come in and other people help with this and we try to back fill. So someone will start talking about something and I’ll interrupt and say, you know, so and so is new and can you explain that or I’ll explain that so to bring them into context.” Cindy also contributes the expectation of participation to the leadership of the meetings, “Phil or Charli kind of trade off leading the meetings and they and they always say ‘does anyone else have anything they want to say about that or does anyone have anything that wanted to bring to the table’ so there’s just very open opportunities to share your opinion.”

**Summary of research question three.** The findings given here address the question, “How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?”

Similar to the other factors, some types of shared learning support a democratic orientation more than others. Pertaining to peer-to-peer learning moments, the types of experiences in which partnership members worked with each other to encourage full contribution directly feed a democratic orientation. In seeking the fullest participation from each member, this endorses a sense of inclusion and open dialogue. The informal orientations and the lone induction example, however, do not directly feed a democratic orientation because the members did not indicate that processes such as inclusion, deliberation, full participation, or consensus seeking were topics that were addressed. Indirectly, however, these types of interactions may prepare someone to be in a better position to participate since they do not feel uneducated about the partnership’s mission or history.

There was diversity among the work days. Some were characterized as simply task-oriented (propagating a particular type of plant), while at least one was more
intentionally designed to include dialogue and reflection on the processes of collaboration. In these instances, the first type of workday might build trust and familiarity among the stakeholders (perhaps encouraging the worker-bee role) but does not directly enhance a democratic orientation, whereas the second type of workday may have had a notable impact on the democratic process being used since it was a means by which partnership members learned how to dialogue, reflect as a group, and co-roles were modeled. Participation in the Institute had a strong impact on promoting and sustaining the democratic processes and roles within the partnership. Because the Institute was a carefully designed learning experience in which the majority of the partnership’s stakeholders participated, it reinforced inclusive dialogue, consensus building, and collaborative problem solving.

In terms of individual partnership learning, the contribution to the democratic process is found within the tactics the partnership’s leaders are using to include members in discussion. The wiki is intended to provide transparency and a means for stakeholders to be informed about the group’s decisions and discussions. The meeting agenda provides a space wherein the chair people are able to encourage participation. These are not strong influencers, however, because the leadership’s orientation is unique to the people who occupy those positions. If two other individuals who did not value a democratic orientation were to chair the partnership it is possible that they would not use the tools (Wiki and meeting format) in the same ways.

**Research Question #4: Individual Member Attributes**

Research question four asks, “How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a
partnership?” Within the overarching concept of member attributes are partnership competencies and members’ degrees of social involvement, otherwise known as publicness.

**Competencies.** The final factor of partnership behavior that is explained in the literature is individual qualities or competencies. Bringle and Hatcher (2002) outline three key relationship competencies: asserting displeasure, providing emotional support, and managing conflict. El Ansari, Phillips, and Zwi (2002) outline five additional competencies that are more focused on public work: educational competencies, partnership fostering skills, community involvement expertise, change agent proficiencies, and strategic and management capabilities. RiseNature members did not refer to their individual partnership competencies in ways that resonated with the competencies suggested in the literature with the exception of asserting displeasure and having previous partnership fostering experience. Rather, they described or demonstrated a myriad of qualities they and other members possess that they felt contributed to how the group worked. See Table 20, Quotes Illustrative of Partnership Competencies that Emerged Among RiseNature Stakeholders, for individual competencies that emerged from within the case.

**Table 20: Quotes Illustrative of Partnership Competencies that Emerged Among RiseNature Stakeholders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Quotations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asserting Displeasure</td>
<td>Able to assert displeasure or disagreement</td>
<td>Kelly is a citizen advocate and she [has] done a lot with parks and just getting [information] out to the public and she tends to get a lot more upset about the scientific stuff. ‘Hey, you’re kind of missing the point. The whole point is that we want to get people involved.’ (Amy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting Opinion</td>
<td>Able to assert opinion</td>
<td>I’m very opinionated, I share my opinions, I think because I have a variety of experiences with my training from Natural Resources Institute I think I can see a lot of different</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


perspectives and I can understand where other people are coming from and their styles because I am a very forward and outgoing person and I know not everybody is like that, so I think I’m pretty good at being able to work with other people and communicate effectively back and forth. (Cindy)

I try to be careful of people's feelings in my personal life, but I'm also the friend that my friends consider the person that will be super honest with them and straightforward like you said, but in kind of the nicest way possible. So, maybe that comes from my personality and background. I just translate to work and what I do at school. Because I do think it's important that people hear the truth when they ask an opinion or how something should work, but some people can be really blunt and not think about other people's feelings in the process. (Caitlin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Devoted to the partnership and its cause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|             | Then I think the third thing has been what it really takes to do something like this. You can only do it when you’ve got people who are truly interested. People are not coming because they are getting paid, people are not coming because they’re getting some big kudos; professional incentives here are murky at best for every single one of us, so being around the table and coming back to the table is really about believing in the mission and making sure that mission stays alive and making sure that we all are aware of our medium, short term and longer term successes to keep us enthusiastic about where we are headed and what we are doing because that is what keeps us coming back. (Charli)

I genuinely want this to succeed because I think it adds value to what we do and what I do personally and what I believe in personally. I’ve been in natural resources and parks and this stuff for a long time and this is just a good partnership and has potential to do a lot. (David)

I was really drawn in by the passion of everybody that was involved in this and how basically everybody had such personal involvement and they were personally driven to make this happen and that’s what really drew me in to what they were all about. (Steve)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invested in People</th>
<th>Tendency to be interested in how other member’s think and feel.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                     | It was interesting sitting over there and I was thinking about what you were thinking about sitting over here. This partnership is one that, at least from my initial conversations - this is a great partnership, it’s doing some things, you look around and there are three people from one agency sitting there, there’s two people from State and Michael and I’m thinking, is she disappointed, is she - and that’s the other thing personally about me is I care about you and I care about everybody at this table and making sure they get out of the partnership what they want to get out of it. I will go out of my way personally to make sure that you get - and maybe that’s cooking the books but I tend to personally, if I’m invested in something like I’m invested in this then I want it to succeed and if it means more work for me, more whatever for me then I’m willing to do it. (David)

… by the same token I’m very tolerant, and I suppose interested in knowing where those people are and understanding where they’re coming from in order in some...
<p>| Goal/Time/Task Oriented | Tendency to focus on the goals, work timeframe, or tasks of the partnership | Phil is a scientist first, and it’s pretty obvious because he’s all about data, he’s about very systematic, if we say we’re going to do this and we have this deadline, if we don’t reach it he gets very upset real quick about it where as other people are like, well we just couldn’t and we can’t do it. (Amy) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------| I’m not a meeting person, I really don’t like having meetings, like I’m more production. I’d rather be out doing trail work than like planning it… [I appreciate] being really focused on this is our task, I like, because sometimes I feel like we’re going in five different directions and I’m trying to figure out how I can best help when I have time, but if I’m not directly tied into that project I really don’t know. (Cindy) |
| Fostering Transparency  | Tendency to make the partnership’s practices, discussions, and decisions transparent. | And one of our potential priority items in that discussion about what we’re going to do next is developing that list in an easy to use more public manner, so to speak, so that it’s not all just in different peoples heads. (Phil) |
| Listening and Learning Capacity | Tendency to listen carefully to other members within the partnership or seek opportunities to be a learner within the partnership | I’d say, ya, it’s my personality to kind of sit back and absorb things rather than provide my opinion on things. A lot of times it will take me the whole time to sit there and listen and be thinking about the situation and it’ll be like an afterthought when I’ll need to say something or I’ll introduce something. (Caitlin) |
| Previous Partnership Fostering Experience | Experience organizing or leading other partnerships. | Most of the radical changes we try on, we discard because they are just that - they’re radical or the morph into something else. It’s a sense of personal satisfaction and a sense that there’s a lot to be done and I could engage students and I can learn things from other people in the process. (Michael U.) |
| Partnership/Mission Protection Proficiency | Makes decisions about his or her contributions based on how they will maintain the mission of the partnership or the productivity of the partnership. | I try to listen and figure out what other folks find is the most fruitful thing to focus on and where to go. (Paul) |
| | | I think Charli brings a lot more experience working with a partnership because she’s done it so much, that’s her research, she worked so much with state [inaudible] groups and the concept of collaboration in sciences and [inaudible] into government. (Amy) |
| | | I really invested a whole lot of my time and effort in an organization and developing that organization to a point where it succeed and became a fixture in the city. I was part of a small group of seven people that created that organization. (Michael U.) |
| | | I can try to come once a month especially where there’s something happening where I see that it would decrease the momentum of what, because what I don’t want to do is decrease the momentum within the group because I know how in a conservation partnership you have certain partners that only show up very occasionally and it kind of gives the impression to the rest of the group sometimes that what’s happening is not quite important enough. (Amanda) |
| | | I think myself I just know that if I’m participating in this group I need to do my share and stay in tune with what’s happening. (Joannie) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stewarding the Process</td>
<td>Tendency to promote the democratically oriented processes of the partnership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>I’m the integrator, I synthesize and I integrate and so “Am I adequately representing what’s being said here?” Sometimes I’m not always sure that I’m adequately representing what is being said here and I want to be sensitive that I’m not putting my stamp on it, I’m actually synthesizing what I’m hearing from the group. We had that long quiet pause there where I said, we have A, B and C and then everybody was really, really quiet for a long time. I have to stop myself from jumping in, I need to be quiet and let somebody else talk. (Charli)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil</td>
<td>Phil was really good about recognizing when the conversation was getting off on a tangent and being like okay guys, let’s focus on this or let’s not - we can discuss that later. I can’t remember exactly but there was something that happened and it struck me as I was like wow he’s actively sort of weaving this discussion without pulling it along but being a sheep herder rather than we’re going this way. (Peter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Saviness</td>
<td>Awareness of the internal and external politics that affect the work of the partnership. [Kelly] knows a lot more about the political ropes and knows a lot of people in the planning department talking about the key players in the departments. (Amy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>I’ve worked in government for 20 years and the City of Wilton is no different from anybody else. They’ve got their priorities, they’ve got elected officials they’ve got to deal with, they’ve got managers, they’ve got staff, I mean I don’t distrust Wilton, I don’t go into it being jaded … I’m like, y’all, you’ve made so much progress with Wilton, … I was like you’ve gotten to identify four nature preserves, what do you want, what more do you want? (David)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatism</td>
<td>Concerned with the practical aspects of the partnership and the practical outcomes of the partnership’s work. I’m a pragmatist and in a given situation, I’m gonna try to look for a solution that makes sense. (Michael U.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>I think there are applications to collaboration and to striking out on your own would be the opposite. There are things I’ve done even recently that’s like, you know I could go through this whole democratic process and help people sign off on things and make sure everybody’s on the same page or I could just do it –sometimes it just needs to be done. (Paul)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation Proficiency</td>
<td>Ability to understand help others to understand different organizational lingo and concerns. Because I’m so involved with lots of different aspects, I kind of know the languages, the different languages that everybody is speaking and if something is proposed in the meeting, I’ll think of it one way like from the county's perspective, but then I’ll also think of it from the academic perspective. (Caitlin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Ability to accept or tolerate delay or difficulty. I think it’s been a tremendous learning experience for me in patience, because I often see a decision and I often see a path and I want to get there immediately and I have to remember that I’m not the only person in the room and we have to sort of take everything account. (Charli)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to that, I have two little kids [laughter] so I have some patience, I hope [laughter] and hopefully the ability to reach out to a lot of other people and collaborate. (William)

It’s a long process. Probably the thing - one element that keeps me involved is that I’m a very patient person. I’ve been here a long time and I see incremental change is the only way things tend to change here. (Michael U.)

Table 21 expands the description of the stakeholders to include participation in the Natural Resources Institute and Individual Partnership Competencies.

**Table 21: Overview of RiseNature Stakeholders Participating in Study Including Participation in Natural Resources Institute, Description of Entrée to Partnership, Roles, and Individual Partnership Competencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Interviewee Count</th>
<th>Natural Resources Institute?</th>
<th>Entrée to Partnership</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Individual Competencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(S) Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Gittin</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
<td>Connector</td>
<td>Public Pragmatist Worker bee</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlin Coder</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Work/Intern Site</td>
<td>Networker Collaborator Workerbee</td>
<td>Listening, learning competency Translation competency Able to assert opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(O) Organization Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Butler</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
<td>Collaborator Connector</td>
<td>Partnership/mission protection Community involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cindy Feltz</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Project Site</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Able to assert opinion Goal/time/task oriented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennie Jenkins</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Project Site</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joannie Rush</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening, learning competency Able to assert opinion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Swinger</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Recruited</td>
<td>Connector</td>
<td>Political savviness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
<td>Collaborator</td>
<td>Invested in people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Hafner</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Organizational Transfer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening, learning competency Pragmatic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Green</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
<td>Wise elder Public</td>
<td>Public Partnership/mission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>YES/NO</td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Personality Traits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Townsend</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Pragmatist, Visionary, Salesman</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Process stewardship, Participation, Fostering, Management, Patience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charli Tibideaux</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Networker, Facilitator, Collaborator, Synthesizer</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Networker, Facilitator, Collaborator, Synthesizer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie Thoms</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Consultant, Time/task/goal oriented</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps, Consultant, Time/task/goal oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leigh Kitrens</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Consulting, Consultant, Time/task/goal oriented</td>
<td>NO, Consulting, Consultant, Time/task/goal oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Upton</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Solution-generator, Learner, Worker bee</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps, Solution-generator, Learner, Worker bee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil Frazier</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Facilitator, Collaborator, Wise Elder</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Facilitator, Collaborator, Wise Elder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Grees</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Public Pragmatist, Collaborator</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Public Pragmatist, Collaborator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Rice</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Looking for engagement opps</td>
<td>NO, Looking for engagement opps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Normer (Citizen Activist)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Networker</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Networker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Boddington (Citizen Scientist)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Networker, Collaborator, Salesman</td>
<td>Passionate about issue, Networker, Collaborator, Salesman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Lorry (Marketing Consultant)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Consulting, Consultant</td>
<td>NO, Consulting, Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **(F) Faculty**
- **(A) Administrators**
- **(R) Residents/Citizens**
Social involvement. Also evident among the themes was a degree of social involvement, or publicness, for most members. Social involvement loosely groups a collection of activities that involve people in formal social networks, whether they be social clubs such as bowling, civic pursuits such as staffing a political campaign, or community building endeavors such as a neighborhood association. This can also be categorized by the types of involvement included in Putnam’s (2000) *Bowling Alone*: political participation, civic participation, religious participation, informal social connections, and connections in the workplace. Barker (2004) describes publicness as “a desire to make one’s work open, civic, inclusive, and pragmatic. People who have a disposition of publicness seek partnerships so that their work is integrated in a public process.”

For some of the partnership members, social involvement was a life-long pursuit, whereas for others it was situational. In other cases it was more a function of their professional job. For some, they exhibited a noticeable commitment to their neighborhood communities to the degree of civic involvement. Finally, some members of the partnership had little to no social involvement and are thus labeled “private.” To further explain these categories, partnership members’ describe their history with social involvement:

- Life-long history of social involvement:

  I’ve always been a joiner. Less so as I’ve gotten older because of time constraints, but yes I’m very much a joiner…[it was first] 4-H, that would have been 4th grade, 5th grade and then there’s church, lots of church groups. I grew up in a very small rural town so this was how you got together with people so I attribute a lot of it to that. I would say 4-H was very formative in many respects because we did enormous amounts of community work and we learned how to do that early, Robert’s Rules of Order and all that kind of thing and went off to a bunch of camps with 4-H, where again you are always working in your tribe or
your group and you’ve got different subgroups that are getting things done. I’m a joiner, I love joining, I love doing something where you’re getting something done for the larger collective and I’m sold…. Becoming a mom and having children and those sorts of things has cut down, a lot of my time now is directed towards my child and so in terms of being a joiner, I’m not joining as much these days so Rise Nature is a big part of what I do in terms of my voluntary capacity, I’m very involved in the PTA. I’ve been the treasurer of the PTA for the last two years which has been a massive eye opener for our local school, just in terms of being involved in that so that’s my big joiner thing. The PTA thing takes easily 10 to 15 hours a week, so it’s a big commitment. We are members of the Unitarian Universalist Church here in Wilton… I’m a volunteer in the children’s classrooms basically through church… We’ve got a very active social life with lots of folks in our community, our neighborhood association is very active… we have parties all the time, we have a huge Mardi Gras party there’s a jazz brunch, there will be a July 4th party there will be a parade and celebration there will be a great October pig roast, there’s always something going on and as more and more families with children have moved to the neighborhood there’s been a lot of activities. We have a neighborhood newsletter that comes out once a month. We tackle everything from political issues to social issues to how do we get our sidewalks fixed and why won’t people pick up their poop with their dogs in the neighborhood to - you name it it’s on the list and comes up in the neighborhood. We know everybody on our street; we have several friends in the neighborhood. Elena could walk to play at friends’ houses. We go to our neighborhood school so we can walk to school. We’ve placed a big emphasis on neighborhood so it’s another big indicator of a joiner piece of me because I want to be able to walk to school with my daughter in the morning, I want to be in a neighborhood where she can walk and play with kids along the street, all of those sorts of things. The other joiner piece, I’m a very active member of a Yoga studio here in town which is a huge part of my life. (Charli)

When I was a child and I grew up a Catholic. So, what that means was I was an altar boy through high school -- nuns and brothers -- and you can't escape that as hard as you try… The other thing that's really important to know, when I was a kid growing up, I knew early on that I was interested in nature. My mother fostered it and she was really good about it, so and this happened at age 6, 7, 8. I was feeding birds at age 9 or 10. I started raising caterpillars. I still raise caterpillars. Here I am 60 and I still raise caterpillars. It's those two things that sort of pushed me into science. I was invited by a neighbor, another kid, another boy who was interested in birds - the two of us started going to Audubon meetings and we were probably 10 and we were the only two kids and - I grew up in Long Island and there were 50 or 60 people at the meetings and it was just us two kids. They would invite us out and when you characterize it as little old ladies in tennis shoes, well that’s pretty much what it was. They loved us and they would take us out and we would spot things, both Mark, my mom and I could spot stuff and we didn’t know what stuff was and we would spot something in the tree and they would say aw catch it that’s a great find and they’d like give
us a piece of candy and we’d get this reward and that was age 10 and I’m still on
the board of Rise Audubon. I’ve been on the Board since 1976, so there’s a pretty
deep commitment to that organization because that organization sort of fostered it.
I’ve been President a couple of times but I’m certainly the oldest, longest running
board member. The chapter started in 1975 and I’ve been on the board since
1976. I tried to retire, I try to leave it and people keep saying no, we need you
just for your knowledge. Audubon has been very important to me… I’m [also]
on the non-game wildlife advisory board. Once again it’s one of these things that
when I talk about tradition and stuff I think it’s just like the Audubon, I make a
commitment and I don’t think that I ever extricated myself from it. I’ve been on
the non-game advisory board since 1986 or ’87, far and away the longest. I’m the
secretary. I’m very active politically, I’ve worked on a lot of campaigns, I’ve
lived in Wilton a long time. The current Mayor, I’ve know Charles for years, part
of my work is to be the Master of Ceremony for Groundhog Day, the Mayor is the
groundhog whisperer so we have that… We have a very strong neighborhood
association. I would say I live in a downtown neighborhood and we’re very, my
wife more so than me, she knows everybody, I don’t remember anybody’s names,
she knows all the kids and everything so I count on her for that. I’m very active
in our neighborhood. I was the head of the neighborhood parks committee for
years and we did a lot of rehabs of parks in our neighborhood. My thing is the
outdoors and natural history stuff, I do a lot of gardening and we belong to the Y
so we exercise at the Y a couple of times a week. I often complain, ‘they have like
50 machines just all stacked up and I use the elliptical the bicycles so I’m on there
and I see these guys just working hard. They’ll be on a machine for 30, 40, 50
minutes, work up their cardio, then they go shower and that’s it’. If we could just
get these people to get some lopping shears and go out to the Drivers Nature Park
with me and just whack back the wisteria! (Peter)

- Situational social involvement:

I don’t join things and on the one hand I sort of feel like that and on the other
hand when I really think about it, I do join things, just not very many of them and
pick them pretty carefully. So, I’ve been on volunteer first aid squads. I haven’t
been in many clubs, but I’ve been on planning boards, like in the one I’m on now.
I usually don’t join hobby types of clubs. Partly because it seems like—and this
is going to sound pretty bad—but it seems like some of the people are really
obsessed. (Phil)

(Speaking of social involvements) Not too much…. I’m a Rise County Master
Gardner. Have been for about five years now I think. Let’s see, I started a Ivy
Streams Garden Club here. I ended up doing that by, I wanted to take Master
Gardner, but I couldn’t get in the class and at that point and time, they only
offered the class every other year and then I saw something in the paper one
Saturday, cause that’s where they have the garden section on Saturday and it was
talking about going through a garden consultant training program. So I called
about that and got involved in that and that was through the National Garden
Association and it was very much like Master Gardner, but it was a whole lot more technical and it takes two years to complete it so by the time I got that completed, I was ready to step into Master Gardner. (Jennie)

- **Function of job:**

I’ve worked with girl scouts, we provide events for them and I have a few ladies that I work with closely in the girl scout office to kind of give opportunities for scouts to come out to the park and not only get our message across to them but get some of their things that they want, so whether service projects or patches. I’m also involved with the South Eastern State Association for Environmental Professionals. Another one of my Natural Resources Institute classmates is one of the head people in that and they are focusing on just getting a bunch of different folks from different agencies that are interested in doing more service related projects and so our big partnership with Rise County has been for them to come out and help us with invasive plant removal and that’s been a really great partnership. Actually, I’m in a partnership with [a local youth group] because they have an office right across the lake and they’ve actually adopted a little section of our trail and we do service projects with them on a regular basis and we also go in and teach different conservation things. We do like a 15 to 20 minute presentation and then they go out and help us pick up trash or do trail work or things of that nature. I’ve gotten my pesticide license and I’m all gung ho about invasive species so there are a few different partnerships for that. And there is always a variety of partnerships for different individuals, I teach different workshops for teachers. My job is all about making connections. (Cindy)

[My company] creates a Christmas CD every year of original, local music and sells it locally and it’s called Have a Holly Wilton Christmas. We’ve done that every year and I’ve been involved in that, that’s probably the largest thing I’m involved in. I’m also on the board of advisors for YMCA and it’s not a non-profit but it’s helped them raise money to be able to give scholarships and allow kids who can’t afford to go to camp be able to go to camp. I’m really not a member of a lot of clubs or a lot of organizations really. I don’t feel like I’m as involved as a lot of people are and are a member of a whole bunch of associations. (Steve)

- **Private:**

I did get more involved with this department (referring to her job), when I was in program management, going out and getting people to participate in recreation programs. That’s something that I’ve always had to work at because I’m comfortable just being with me so that was something I had to work at. In college, I probably didn’t do a lot…but then by my senior year I was involved with our club for our department. (Katie)
I’m not a joiner…I’ve always tried to be a faculty who cooperates with others…I’ve never been one to join this group and that group. (Leigh)

The degree of social involvement or commitment to publicness is mapped in Figure 11 (page 201) onto the degree of involvement each participant exhibited in the partnership. There are a few members for whom this cannot be determined, as in those cases where someone is new to the partnership or has significantly decreased their involvement very recently. Degree of involvement describes the timespan of their involvement and degree of participation in meetings over that timespan. “Core members” have been members for multiple years and tend to be at most of the meetings. “Peripheral members” have either been members for a short time or have inconsistent meeting attendance. In two instances, stakeholders float between core and peripheral locations within the partnership. This is due to changes in their involvement over time. In one instance, this is a person who is relatively new to the partnership but who attends all meetings, has represented RiseNature in other forums, and actively collaborates with other members on the partnership’s work. In the other instance, this is someone who also regularly attended meetings, actively collaborated, and was deeply involved in the development of the foundational work of the partnership. In recent months, that stakeholder has been unavailable for many meetings and some partnership work. “Consultants” are those people who do not see themselves as members, but who have provided consultation to the group or completed a task on behalf of the group.

It does not appear to be chance that people who prefer a public set of involvements are drawn to a partnership such as RiseNature that is so public and democratic in its orientation. “The skills and interests people cultivate determine the circles in which they move and hence, the kinds of social encounters they are most likely
to experience” (Bandura, 1986, p. 34). Consonant with Bandura’s theory is the way in which the stakeholders of RiseNature who have historically and currently been the most involved socially now take core positions within the partnership.

**Figure 11: Degree of Publicness by Degree of Partnership Involvement**

**Typology of general member types.** By looking at the level of involvement, roles, and competencies each of the members possesses, it is possible to draw a general typology of the participants that illustrates the ways in which they contributed to or
tolerated the democratic orientation of the partnership. (See Figure 12: Typology of General Member Types).

**Figure 12: Typology of General Member Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation Affiliation</th>
<th>Participation Driver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utility: “I give to get” and “Just tell me what to do”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration: “It’s vital to have a shared purpose and consensus on how we’ll get there.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The members who fell within the core group (See Figure 11) valued and promoted collaboration and were socially involved either throughout their lifetime or to high degree albeit on a situational basis, but they varied on the prevalence of their personal competencies. Phil, Charli, and Peter exhibited the propensity for protecting the partnership and mission or stewarding the processes used within the partnership. Michael U. and David have high regard for their peers’ experience within the partnership: they are invested emotionally in people. Kelly has high competence in those areas that move forward the natural resource protection issues in the political and public arenas. Even though the group’s competencies are diverse, they do have significant commonalities. This group exemplifies the main categorization used within the typology: while all are driven to participate in the partnership by collaboration and a propensity for social
involvement, some do so because they see it as a way to primarily enact their
organizational agenda whereas other do so because they see it as a way to primarily enact
their personal agenda. Although they may preference an organizational agenda, this does
not preclude them being personally interested and passionate about the work of the
partnership. Similarly, members who preference a personal agenda may see some
benefits toward their organizational agenda. This group provides the basis for the two
right-hand quadrants of the typology: driven by collaboration but split between realizing
an organizational agenda or personal agenda.

The distinction between the right-hand and left-hand quadrants is the distinction
between a focus on utility or collaboration.

I heard a comment the other day from somebody that had been going to Rise
Nature Preserve and they’re not going anymore…they said something about - are
they getting anything done now or are they still, are they doing more than talking?
And when this person told me that they said that I thought, it’s just a different
interpretation of the meetings. There are people that cannot stand to go to
meetings, I like to go to meetings because, I don’t know why, I just get energy
from meetings, from meeting people, from talking to people, from networking,
from learning new tidbits of information and so for me, I mean I’ve been to
meetings that have been a total waste of my time, I’ve walked away and said - oh,
my gosh I don’t ever want to go to another meeting like that - I’ve never felt like
that with Rise Nature Preserve. (Joannie Rush)

The members within the consultative group (See Figure 1) have contributed
individually to the partnership, though they do not see themselves as members. Their role
is utilitarian in that they have been contacted (or have sought out the partnership) so that
they could fulfill a task, service, or project.

Again, we see a distinction within the members who are motivated to participate
in the partnership by utility. Those who provide consultative services because they are
personally motivated to do so tend to see their participation as a free contribution of
expertise (e.g. pro bono work). Those who are motivated by utility and who participate as a result of their organizational affiliation tend to experience tension between negotiating their organization’s needs and priorities and the collaborative and deliberative processes of the partnership. This group is labeled the “In Tension” group because they have a high degree of concern for balancing their organization’s needs with their participation.

It feels (I’m trying to think how to express it). It doesn’t feel as close and trusting where other partnerships I’ve had … I feel a little bit like Rise Nature is more ‘this is new, we have to do everything exactly right. We have to be very careful’ and it just doesn’t have the same comfort level that I have traditionally in other partnerships. Maybe because it’s a university and … some of the stuff they’ve developed is very academically focused which doesn’t necessarily match with what [my organization] is doing. So, it’s hard to express. It really is. (Julie)

The members who fall within the periphery group (See Figure 11) do so because they have been involved in the partnership for only a short time or have inconsistent attendance. They identify as falling within all but the consultative quadrant: their categorization as in the periphery does not dictate any particular participation driver or affiliation as a group.

The characteristics of each general member type are further described in Table 22: Characteristics of the Four Quandrants within the Typology of General Member Types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quadrant 1: In-Tension</th>
<th>Quadrant 2: Organizationally Collaborative</th>
<th>Quadrant 3: Consultative</th>
<th>Quadrant 4: Personally Passionate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 22: Characteristics of the Four Quandrants within the Typology of General Member Types
Summary of research question four. Research question four asks, “How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?”

The competencies exhibited by the stakeholders do not necessarily imply an enhanced democratic orientation within the partnership. As the partnership appears to be democratically oriented, some of these competencies may support and sustain that orientation. For example, in an already democratically oriented partnership, commitment, fostering transparency, listening and learning, partnership protection proficiency, asserting displeasure, asserting opinions, and process stewardship may sustain the democratic processes already at play. Due to the nature of the study and the period in which the research was conducted in the lifetime of the partnership, it is unable to be determined if these competencies would instigate a democratic orientation.

The level of social involvement when paired with the depth of partnership involvement holds an interesting value for the democratic orientation of RiseNature. If it can be assumed that the core members endorse and promulgate the democratic processes
and roles within RiseNature, and their level of social involvement is significant (either falling into the life-long or situational categories), then there may be a relationship between the two. Also, if it can be assumed that the consultative stakeholders fall outside of the partnership’s democratic processes and roles (and in fact embrace a standpoint of solely offering technical expertise), and their level of social involvement is minimal (either falling into the private or function of job categories), there may be a relationship between the two.

The typology offers an opportunity to understand that within a democratically-oriented partnership, not all of its members or associated stakeholders maintain a democratic orientation, themselves. Within RiseNature, some of the members tolerate the democratic processes whereas others enact them. Though it appears that there are more members who enact a democratic orientation than those who simply tolerate it, it is inconclusive if the number of members who embrace an orientation is predictive of its place within a partnership. It appears that the members who enact a democratic orientation within RiseNature are more central to the partnership, have been with it longer, and occupy positions of leadership.

In sum, the individual attributes that have the strongest relationship with democratic roles and processes within RiseNature are level of social involvement, centrality to the partnership, and positions of leadership. Leadership is explored in greater detail within the next section.

**Leadership**

Interestingly, in each of the preceding sections, the theme of leadership (or its observable behaviors) is present. As such, it is a unique dynamic present within
RiseNature. A little while after the group started to meet regularly at Steamer’s, they chose to elect co-chairs who were both from the University. This was an intentional decision on the part of the partnership to avoid appearing to the public as if they were leaning toward one political stance within the open space/active use debate.

The chair people have particular characteristics as individuals, and both were motivated to be a part of the partnership from its beginning by a personal passion for the issue of responsible land management of the area’s unique natural resources. Charli exhibits a high degree of passion for the processes of consensus making and partnership development. Table 23 reiterates their personal qualities as they relate to participation in the Natural Resources Institute, the roles they take within the partnership, the partnership competencies they exhibit, and the degree of their social involvement.

Table 23: Chair Person Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institute</th>
<th>Entrée to Partnership</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Competencies</th>
<th>Social Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phil Frazier</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
<td>Facilitator, Collaborator, Wise Elder</td>
<td>Fostering transparency, Time/task/goal oriented, Partnership/mission protection, Listening, learning competency, Commitment</td>
<td>Situational Social Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charli Tibideaux</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Passionate about issue</td>
<td>Networker, Facilitator, Collaborator, Synthesizer</td>
<td>Process stewardship, Participation Fostering, Past Partnership Fostering, Strategic Management, Patience</td>
<td>Life Long</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though there are various forms of leadership (formal, informal, positional, etc.), the members of RiseNature consistently pointed to their chair people when discussing any sort of leadership-related matters. For example, Michael B. says, “Charli and Phil have assumed the leadership role of our group. Through their roles as co-chairs they
keep our meetings organized and keep everybody on task.” Their specific functions include setting structure, facilitation, and synthesis. These, in turn, influence the ways in which democratically-oriented processes are enacted. The chair people were observed as having particular sensitivity to democratically oriented processes such as transparency, creating opportunities for deliberation, consensus-building, and inclusion.

**Structure.** The chair-person role has a heavy influence on the partnership, its processes, and its democratic orientation. The meeting format (structured agenda sent in advance with opportunity for comment prior to the meeting) was selected, and enacted, by the chair people. The technological vehicle (Wiki) through which the agendas, minutes, and asynchronous discussion are conveyed were built by and enacted by a chair person. Their contributions to the structure of the partnership have implications for the degree to which members participate, have room for deliberation, and are able to access the partnership’s history.

The chair people have settled into a pattern of behavior around the meetings that includes communicating between the two of them to set the agenda points: Phil posting the draft agenda to the Wiki for the group’s review and Charli sending an email to the partnership list to remind them of the upcoming meeting and to request that they view the agenda and add any points in advance of the meeting. Both field requests from members to update the agenda, though each member has the ability to post directly to the Wiki.

**Facilitation.** At the meeting, Charli tends to facilitate while Phil takes notes and posts them directly to the Wiki. When Charli is unavailable to be at a meeting, Phil will facilitate and take minutes. When Phil is not able to be present, Charli takes on both roles. Both tend to invite open discussion and input. Cindy explains:
Phil or Charli kind of trade off leading the meetings and they always say ‘does anyone else have anything they want to say about that or does anyone have anything that wanted to bring to the table’ so there’s just very open opportunities to share your opinion.

Of the two, Phil may have a greater comfort for free discussion which he notes, himself, but was also observed over the length of the study:

I also tend to let conversations go on longer than perhaps they should more so than Charli does. She’ll be quicker to bring things back to point whereas I have a tendency to let people wander more and I’m not putting value judgment on either one of those approaches; I’m just describing some of the differences. Sometimes letting people wander is a good thing cause it leads someplace surprising. (Phil)

This meeting was very different than the last one [the researcher] attended. At last meeting, there were much longer periods of discussion and debate. This meeting was run a bit ‘tighter’ and [the researcher] got the sense that the group was observing an unspoken rule related to keeping comments short and on-topic. (Field Notebook)

**Synthesis.** Charli is the chair-person who tends to synthesize the group’s discussion most frequently. In doing so, she encapsulates the group’s feelings, knowledge, and experience in summary form that is useful for decision making.

According to Phil,

Charli is the one that takes all of the discussion and distills it down to something coherent. Charli is a little more deliberate about things and she listens better and synthesizes better on the fly than I do so the “here’s what I’m hearing” summaries tend not to happen as much or as well as when I am chairing as when Charli is.

Reviewing the group’s minutes, the result of this synthesis is short, concise summaries that include the opinions of those who provided input prior to (electronically) or during the meeting (in-person):

*(Speaking of the decision to move to monthly meetings)* Pros: we don't need to meet as often given where we are in the maturation of our organization, conserve scarce resources, get work done on wiki/use meeting times for essential discussion, potential to increase membership at meetings if we have fewer
Cons: will people come to the meetings? will we lose some social capital? will people actually work in committees in between meetings? potential to be meeting-
ed to death if you are on several committees. [Member] voiced a preference for 1st Thurs instead of 3rd Thurs due to conflicts in her schedule. (Partnership meeting minutes)

**Transparency.** As discussed earlier, the origins of the partnership include a controversial public process in which land was ultimately preserved rather than used for active recreation. As a result, the partnership (some members of which were quite vocal during that process) is keenly aware of the contested landscape in which it operates. Transparency is a value that pervades the partnership but is specifically enacted by one of the chairs, Phil: “If we do something it’s out there and anybody in the world can look at it, we don’t care, it’s what we did, we’ve got nothing to hide. You might not like what we do, but there it is.” This sensitivity to transparency serves the partnership in terms of its dealings with outside audiences, but also within its membership. Members feel comfortable using the Wiki tool to look up past discussions and learn more about previous discussions.

**Deliberation and consensus building.** Charli’s previous partnership-building experience and research interests in governance of natural resources and decision making interactions exemplify a sensitivity toward using deliberation to build consensus. The other members see this partnership as one in which space is created to consider ideas and positions and come to consensus as an organized process.

I think that they really do listen to what people have to say and they don’t make really quick decisions, they really let things marinate, so if there’s something that we’re really unsure about or we don’t have a general consensus it’s like, lets keep thinking about it, lets table that and lets get back to it. (Caitlin)

**Inclusion.** The chair people are specifically interested in creating an open and permeable conversation that includes the voices of those who are interested in preserving
the unique natural resources within Rise County. This means that they have embraced the diversity of stakeholders who might be a part of the conversation.

Cause I do think we get a lot out of -- this is such an overused word -- but the diversity of people that in the room and the experiences that they bring to the table. God knows there have probably been dozens of times where I would bring something up saying we ought to be such and such and somebody would bring something up in contrast to that that I would never even thought of and I know that's happened to other people with more different perspectives. (Phil)

This inclusion of diverse stakeholders necessitates the ability to make space for members who do not represent the traditional natural resource perspective. For example, the chairs openly welcomed a citizen scientist to the group who had a niche research interest in lichens. They actively sought opportunities to court the City of Wilton’s participation in the effort to preserve resources. Both chair people have participated in the process by which the City of Wilton clarified its own process of identifying and naming the preserve areas within its own park system. Though this process took quite a bit of time and effort beyond what they were investing in the RiseNature partnership, the chair people valued it as a means to include the City.

**Contributions to a democratic orientation.** When taken together, the actions of the chair people have greatly influenced the way in which RiseNature enacts a democratic orientation. This does not appear to be coincidental. Rather, it is a coordinated and intentional set of decisions that promote a structure and facilitation techniques that create space for transparency, deliberation, and inclusion. These are qualities that are significantly influenced by the partnership’s leadership.

Interestingly, these chair people have been in leadership positions from the beginning of RiseNature’s formal development as a partnership. One might question the democratic nature of a partnership in which two people within the whole group have so
much influence over the group’s processes. This is a concern that they have also considered:

… there have been other things that we’ve mentioned from time to time and nothing has happened [for example,] rotating the leadership, like getting it off Charli and my plate a little bit, letting somebody else do it. Having meetings somewhere else than at SE State. Partly it’s because, at least Charli and I sometimes worry about this starting to look like an SE State creature rather than a more diffuse creature. It’s just like the meeting frequency time, it gets brought up, everybody kind of goes yeah, and we just laugh and keep doing what we’re doing. So we have no formal process for periodically electing chairs, that’s back to the board meeting thing. It’s like every two years you elect a new Chair and guess what the meeting is usually where the Chair works and that’s where you go. I’m sure you’ve experienced that. It’s just not happening, so far. I think it should. I think it should for a number of reasons actually, well at least two. One is that it’s good to change leadership from time to time and the other is, it gets back to that ownership question, and sort of commitment question. There’s a certain level of commitment and ownership that would happen if say, David Gree s was going to be Chair for a year and I’m not in anyway impugning David’ devotion to the Rise Nature concept, but there’s something more about David Gree s from Rise County Open Space as Chair of Rise Nature for a year and we’re meeting at the Rise County offices during that time period. (Phil)

Summary

It is clear that while the literature provides a starting point to anticipate the processes, roles, conditions, partnership learning interactions, and personal competencies found within a partnership, this particular partnership did not adhere completely to these anticipated qualities. RiseNature exhibits a range of additional qualities and relationships between those qualities. In addition, the conditions, partnership learning interactions, and personal competencies that are found within the literature are not necessarily democratically oriented. They are simply factors that have been identified as meaningful to partnership development, generally.

Of the factors explored within this study and this partnership, the most salient to facilitating a democratic orientation are:
• Conditions that located the partnership in the context of citizen action, public process, and inter-organizational collaboration.

• Learning interactions in which members empowered one another to participate fully by directly stating the type of participation that was desired and holding one another accountable to that; intentionally designed events that included dialogue and reflection on the processes of collaboration; and participating in a formalized curriculum that reinforced inclusive dialogue, consensus building, and collaborative problem solving.

• Individual attributes that feature depth of social involvement in relation to depth of partnership involvement.

• Leaders who preference a democratic orientation and who promote a structure and facilitation techniques that create space for transparency, deliberation, and inclusion of diverse stakeholders.
Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications

This explanatory case study collected evidence of the explanatory proposition and its associated research questions through interviews, observations, and document review. The data generated were analyzed in two phases, using provisional and in vivo codes to reduce them so that they could be compared with a priori codes that described the reciprocal determinants of interest to the study. This chapter provides discussion of the data produced within the case by highlighting poignant findings. Questions for future research are posed throughout the chapter as are possible scholarly implications. The chapter concludes with a section dedicated to implications for the practice of community-university engagement, specific to the development of democratically engaged partnerships.

When considered in light of the explanatory proposition and research questions, the data yield a number of findings pertinent to central aims of the study. Though expected, one finding that legitimizes the endeavor of putting forth an explanatory proposition and research questions concerned with democratic engagement is that not all of the partnership processes and roles provided in the literature or those that emerged within RiseNature are inherently democratic. Rather, the elements drawn from the literature are simply characteristics common amongst community-university partnerships and some of the emergent elements from the case may not be democratically oriented when found in other more technocratic partnership contexts.

Those processes that are democratically oriented in and out of this particular partnership include collaboration, power diffusion, reciprocation, inclusion, deliberation, full participation, transparency, and consensus seeking. The roles exhibited within
RiseNature may not be democratically oriented when fulfilled in another partnership context. However, within this specific partnership, they take on a democratic orientation and allow the members to connect the work of the partnership to the larger public sphere of concerns, shepherd its processes, and move forward its functional work.

This finding is important because it makes clear that questioning *how* the influences, or reciprocal determinants, encourage a democratic orientation is forward movement within the scholarship on democratic engagement. From this foundational understanding, the explanatory proposition and research questions then flow:

- **Explanatory Proposition:** The interaction between conditions external to the partnership, individual stakeholder attributes, and shared learning experiences will facilitate a partnership’s adoption of processes and roles indicative of democratically engaged community-university partnerships.
  - Research Question #1: How are the processes and roles of a democratically oriented community-university partnership exhibited and enacted?
  - Research Question #2: How do social, political, and organizational conditions facilitate the emergence of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
  - Research Question #3: How do partnership learning interactions among stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?
Research Question #4: How do the individual attributes of stakeholders facilitate the emergence and application of democratically oriented processes within a partnership?

**Questioning the Universality of Democratic Orientation to Other Partnership Elements**

The first research question seeks to describe how the processes and roles are exhibited and enacted in a democratically oriented community-university partnership. The study found that RiseNature exhibited some of the pre-determined democratic processes including collaboration, power diffusion, reciprocation, and inclusion. There were, however, some democratically oriented processes that emerged within the case, that were not explicitly suggested in the literature: deliberation, full participation, transparency, and consensus seeking. What’s more, some of the processes exhibited within the case were neither democratic nor anti-democratic (mission focus and leadership), and it can be inferred that their orientation would be particularly dependent on the overall partnership orientation in which they are found. Finally, some of the processes exhibited could be considered challenging to a democratic orientation, including concern with efficiency, deviation from or inattention to democratic process, and getting bogged down in discussion or information. It is important to consider how these findings add to our understanding of how processes and roles are exhibited and enacted in a democratically oriented community-university partnership.

**Process enactment.** Some of the identified processes were brought about by certain phenomenon, and even other processes. Examples of this include the process of
inclusion being achieved through information sharing or use of technology; efficiency being enacted through the use of subcommittee structures or technology; transparency being promoted through the use of technology; getting bogged down because of technology, inclusion, or deliberation; consensus seeking being enacted through use of deliberation; and trust being made possible by having previous relationships and prior collaboration.

**Role exhibition.** Participants did not describe or exhibit their roles in ways that resonated with those drawn from the literature. The exhibited roles helped the partnership to accomplish certain central tasks and were wide-ranging in their appearance. They include connector, networker, public pragmatist, salesman, wise elder, facilitator, synthesizer, worker bee, consultant, learner, and collaborator. Partnership members enacted roles fluidly, being able to employ multiple roles within one partnership interaction, and selecting the appropriate role to take given the circumstances. As there were no mechanisms for the partnership to formally call upon people to take on certain roles, members appear to enact roles by personal decision; and these roles were often were akin to roles people played in other similar experiences. The ability of the partnership to formally request particular roles may happen as a result of the new subcommittee structure being adopted at the close of the study. During the study, however, this was not employed.

**Process and role support of democratic orientation.** It appears that processes and roles that support a democratic orientation within this case emerged so that the partnership’s primary tasks could be accomplished and the overarching ways of operating could be maintained. Many of the processes were enacted so that the partnership could be
inclusive, collaborative, and efficient. Members also enacted many roles to promote these aims and used processes and roles to ground the work of the partnership in the public sphere.

Within this set of findings is another important outcome: not all of its processes, or all of the roles employed, or all of its stakeholders maintain a democratic orientation. This produces two very interesting questions: How does a democratically oriented partnership utilize technocratic interactions to accomplish its goals? And, what is the function of technocratic processes and roles within partnerships that have an overarching democratic orientation?

An example of the existence of technocratic features within a democratically oriented partnership was demonstrated within the pilot study (Dostilio, 2010) conducted to clarify the issues being studied here. That pilot study applied the framework of democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) to a case of service-learning that was highly inclusive of community input and resulted in an outdoor classroom and promotion of a mentoring program for youth. Though the class itself was structured in democratic ways, the resulting projects were technocratically oriented. The class occurred as one activity within a much larger community-university partnership between the community of Oakglen and a neighboring university. Over the past ten years, the Oakglen community has experienced the closing of all of its schools, public and parochial alike. As a result, Oakglen youth are bussed to seven different feeder pattern schools. In their new school environments, Oakglen students have encountered transitional difficulties being absorbed into the identity and community of schools that are not their own. Oakglen students have experienced significant increases in suspension and expulsion
rates, and building leaders complain of very low parental involvement rates. To address these problems, as well others, a partnership developed between various Oakglen community leaders, parents, residents, faith leaders, and faculty, administrators and students from a mid-sized, private, urban university. The partnership meets monthly, alternating its meeting locations between university and community spaces, and employs a variety of joint activities to address the education disparities found within Oakglen. These activities include a number of service-learning classes, a jointly taught doctoral class (taught by a community leader and faculty person), community-based research projects, evaluations, and a co-founded afterschool program that hosts numerous student volunteers alongside parental volunteers. Overall, the partnership is democratically oriented and its stakeholders seek to democratically engage one another. It maintains an atmosphere of inclusion, collaboration, and joint efforts to leverage policy and community knowledge to address the educational concerns of the community.

**Complicating the role of activity and place in democratic engagement.** This explanatory case and the pilot study complicate the Democratic Engagement White Paper’s (Saltmarsh et al., 2009) assertion that engagement strategies focused on activity and place do not yield broad, democratic engagement. There appears to be an unexplored relationship among technocratic processes, roles, and personal orientations and larger, more democratically engaged partnerships. This discovery from these works appears to suggest that within a democratically engaged partnership some activities may be technocratically oriented. Future research should explore the effect of technocratically oriented activities on a partnership’s overall democratic orientation.
Discussion of Explanatory Proposition in Light of Findings

This study chose to use the reciprocal determinants of conditions external to the partnership, individual stakeholder attributes, and partnership learning interactions to examine the development of the democratic orientation found within RiseNature. The explanatory proposition proposes that interaction between all three factors influences the enactment of democratic processes and roles. The proposition is most concerned with the ways in which these units interact. When taken together, the three factors interact to produce a unique and context-specific outcome within the case. However, not all of the conditions, partnership learning interactions, and stakeholder attributes present within the case influence a democratic orientation. The findings shared in chapter four highlight a short list of factors that appear relevant to the case’s democratic orientation. These include:

- Conditions that located the partnership in the context of citizen action, public process, and inter-organizational collaboration;
- Learning interactions in which members empowered one another to participate fully by directly stating the type of participation that was desired and holding one another accountable to that; intentionally designed events that included dialogue and reflection on the processes of collaboration; and participating in a formalized curriculum that reinforced inclusive dialogue, consensus building, and collaborative problem solving and;
- Individual attributes that featured depth of social involvement in relation to depth of partnership involvement.
The explanatory proposition states that the interaction among the three factors will promote the adoption of processes and roles indicative of democratic engagement. In fact, not all of the factors affect all of the processes and roles equally. It appears that the conditions that locate the partnership in the public sphere and individual attributes that leverage a preference for social involvement make necessary processes that are publicly oriented (inclusion, deliberation, and transparency) and roles that allow connection of the partnership’s work to the larger public (connector, networker, public pragmatist, and salesman). The conditions that make necessary inter-organizational collaboration; the learning interactions that encourage empowerment, full participation, collaboration, and problem-solving; and the personal attributes that promote depth of involvement within the partnership facilitate the emergence of processes that promote democratic participation (e.g. collaboration, power diffusion, full participation, reciprocation, and consensus-seeking) and roles that shepherd those processes along (e.g. wise elder, facilitator, and synthesizer).

**Consideration of differential influence of factors.** What is critical to note is that not all three factors interact with equal force for all democratic roles and processes. Rather, conditions and individual attributes appear most pertinent to the publicly oriented processes and roles. Learning interactions and individual attributes appear most pertinent to the participation oriented processes and roles. This is consonant with Bandura’s theories of reciprocal determinism. Bandura states that reciprocality does not mean symmetry in the strength of the influences (1986) or simultaneity of the influences (1983). Here, then, is another implication for further research: the scope of this study might be reduced to investigate the relationship between any dyadic pair of determinants.
and processes/roles. For example, it may be fruitful to study the influence of conditions that locate a community-university partnership in a public process on the development of publicly oriented processes and roles. Greater depth may be achieved by examining what challenges and facilitators arise within this pairing.

**Consideration of leadership.** Also important is that one finding was unexpected and not accounted for within the original explanatory proposition: the influence of leadership. The formal leadership provided by the partnership chair people endorsed and encouraged structures that promoted transparency, inclusion, and deliberation. The chair people introduced technology and particular agenda styles and took on duties to encourage full member participation. They often took on roles of facilitator, synthesizer, and steward of the democratic process. According to Bandura (1986), “When situational constraints are weak, personal factors serve as the predominant influence in the regulatory system (p. 24).” The chair people did bring to bear their personal preferences for consensus building, democratic behaviors, and great trust in the group’s process. This finding is compatible with the Weiss, Miller Anderson, and Lasker (2002) study, which investigated leadership as one dimension of partnership functioning and found that among five dimensions leadership had the closest relationship with partnership synergy. Within the leadership domain, they included areas such as taking responsibility for the partnership; inspiring and motivating partners; empowering partners; working to develop a common language within the partnership; fostering respect, trust, inclusiveness, and openness in the partnership; creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced; resolving conflict among partners; combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners; and helping the partnership look at things differently and be creative.
Looking at this finding through the lens of reciprocal determinism, it cannot be concluded that leader behavior solely dictates follower or peer behavior. Leader behavior is a cause of subordinate behavior and is also caused by it (Sims & Manz, 1984), a form of reciprocal determinism. Thus, the leadership exhibited within RiseNature influences the democratic processes and roles found therein and is also influenced by those processes and roles. This perspective on leadership can be categorized as being in the dyadic relationship domain of leadership theories (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). One important implication of this is the need to study multiple levels of leadership-related behavior within democratically engaged partnerships: what influence the leader(s) assert, what influence the followers assert, and what influence the leader-follower relationship exerts. Within a reciprocal determinism perspective, this last level would be most applicable and is what Graen and Uhl-Bien call a “leadership-member exchange (LMX)” approach (p. 225). As this is applied to democratic engagement, their work on the ways in which LMX is a transformational leadership model is particularly interesting (p. 238).

LMX research supposes that formal leadership is present and that its primary objective is to realize a goal within a particular organization or arrangement. Another way to pursue this might be akin to the work of Huxham and Vangen (2000), in which they study collaborative leadership, or that leadership which is enacted to bridge multiple organizations, or networks, or communities. This is also applicable to democratically engaged partnerships, particularly those that involve a diverse group of stakeholders, some coming from organizations, some as interested citizens, and perhaps some that are considered organizations (rather than individual members). The Huxham and Vangen
study specifically investigated the factors that led a collaboration’s work in one direction or another and found that structure, processes, and participants are the media through which a particular leadership agenda is pursued. In other words, they found that structure, processes, and participant behaviors drive the leadership agenda. Even though this work illuminates an important distinction with LMX theories, it also supports the reciprocal influence of leadership (albeit collaborative leadership) and the structure, processes, and stakeholders of the partnership.

Contemplating this related research leads to several areas for future research within democratic engagement. It may be an important step to investigate the relationship between the specific leadership behaviors described by Weiss, Anderson, and Lasker (2002) and democratic roles and processes found within community-university partnerships. It would also be fruitful to further explore the ways that leader-member exchange (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) might provide a framework for understanding the role of leadership in democratically oriented partnerships. Finally, another way of organizing future research would be to examine the relationship between democratically oriented leadership and the structures, processes, and stakeholders of the partnership (Huxham & Vangen, 2000).

It may also be important to consider the implications of the choices made within this specific case related to leadership. For example, the chair people within this community-university partnership were both faculty members. As discussed in chapter four, this was an intentional decision made within the partnership to avoid the appearance of political bias. However, there may be unintended consequences of enacting such a decision in light of the inclusive and democratic orientation of the partnership. For
instance, how might having two faculty influence the tensions felt around meeting location, frequency of meetings, and emphasis placed on wordsmithing? How might having two faculty strengthen the university’s commitment to the partnership? How might having one faculty and one agency chair person change the partnership dynamics?

**Consideration of time.** Also of vital interest to this discussion is the fact that the present study captured a brief period in the lifetime of the RiseNature partnership. As has been mentioned, due to the partnership’s desire for efficiency they will be moving to a new structure in which subcommittees will be used. This new partnership structure may likely change the processes and roles that the stakeholders have enacted during the period of the study. It is likely that other developments will also change the processes and roles exhibited and enacted within the partnership. The nature of the partnership’s work may no longer be contested at some point. The shared learning experiences that exist may be altered or enhanced. The individual attributes will change as members leave and join the group.

The sustainability of the democratic orientation may be possible even through changes given the right mix of circumstances and practices. According to Bandura (1978, 1986), the diffusion of values and social practice (in this case, democratic engagement) has two components: acquisition of the knowledge of democratic engagement and adoption of democratic engagement in practice. Acquisition is largely accomplished through modeling, whereas adoption is influenced by anticipated incentives or benefit; self-evaluative reactions such as those people adopt that align to their beliefs and values or personal attributes; and resources such as money, skills, and accessory resources necessary to the adoption. For the period of this study, it is arguable that RiseNature
demonstrated acquisition of democratic engagement and for some time has been working toward adopting a continued democratic orientation. This adoption process is being facilitated by the personal attributes of the leadership, social conditions in which the partnership operates, and the shared learning gained through the Institute. Challenges to the adoption process include a focus on efficiency, scarce resources, and the personal attributes of those members who value task completion over collaboration. If further research continues to use the lens of reciprocal determinism, it may be advantageous to revisit RiseNature once the subcommittee structure has been implemented and use Bandura’s attributes of adoption (anticipated incentives, self-evaluative reactions, and resources) to analyze the partnership’s continued adoption of democratic engagement.

Questions arise when the issue of time is considered within the RiseNature case. Would certain member attributes contribute to the development of a democratic orientation within a new partnership or one in which the orientation is changing? The member attributes documented within this study were correlated to the processes and roles as they exist in this particular window of time. It is quite possible that they would take on new meaning during a different time. Is a democratic orientation important within all phases of a partnership’s lifetime? For example, is this partnership moving away from a democratic orientation now that it has moved beyond establishing inclusion and transparency for public purposes and is turning its attention to task-oriented work? Perhaps there has been value for the partnership to adopt a democratic stance whilst establishing itself and as it turns its attention to a greater number of preservation projects there may be value in departing from that orientation. Would that departure be permanent
or temporary? Further research on the role democratic engagement plays within the phases of a partnership is necessary.

**Revision to Explanatory Proposition**

In order to fully evaluate the explanatory proposition, the relevance of being time-bound must be joined with what is known about reciprocal determinism (that the influence of determinants is asynchronous and unequal in force), the important role of leadership as a fourth determinant, and the foundational understanding that not all processes and roles within this democratically oriented partnership are democratic. Taking these ideas into account, the explanatory proposition is revised to promote greater specificity in this way:

*Within a specific window of time, two or more determinants (inclusive of conditions external to the partnership, individual stakeholder attributes, partnership learning interactions, and leadership influence) will interact to make democratic processes and roles temporally necessary within a democratically engaged community-university partnership.*

**Discussion of Theoretical Frame in Light of Other Theories**

The development of research questions and analysis of this study were guided by Badura’s theory of reciprocal determinism (1977, 1978, 1983, 1986). As such, the study relied heavily on three determinants to frame the development of democratically oriented processes and roles within RiseNature: external conditions, stakeholder attributes, and partnership learning interactions. This theoretical frame also informed the explanatory proposition guiding the method of the study and the resulting revision discussed in the previous section. Overall, the direction it provided the study was strong and its use in
analysis has promoted an assortment of questions and directions for future study. Studies such as those in industrial and organizational psychology may also provide interesting frameworks for further study of the nature of organizational culture as it affects community-university partnerships, particularly when parsing the emergence of a democratic orientation. RiseNature never explicitly determined that it would embrace and promote a democratic culture, and there may be fertile ground to connect this study to those that explore culture development. This may include theories relating to organizational culture (Pettigrew, 1979; Schein, 1990), and could also include partnership identity development (Janke, 2008).

**Organizational culture.** Organizational culture is a set of theories that arise from anthropology, sociology, social psychology, and organizational behavior. Built on systems theory (Katz & Kahn, 1966), it allows one to analyze differences in patterns of behavior and levels of stability of behavior in groups or organizations (Schein, 1990). The existence of organizational culture depends on a group having a common history and membership and is

…what a group learns over a period of time as that group solves its problems of survival in an external environment and its problems of internal integration…it is displayed through a) observable artifacts, b) values, and c) basic underlying assumptions. (Schein, 1990, p. 111)

Cooper and Phillips (1997) pursued a variation on reciprocal determinism that allowed them to analyze organizational culture. In their study of safety culture within industry, they found Bandura’s ideas of reciprocal influence between external factors, internal psychological factors, and the situation provided a compelling explanation of the
phenomenon of total quality management. Their study promoted the reciprocal relationship between determinants, and they amended Bandura’s theoretical work to specifically explain the influences of safety culture. In terms of internal psychology factors or attributes, they defined this as safety climate. In terms of external factors, they defined this as safety behavior. In terms of behaviors, or shared interactions of learning, they defined this as the safety management system. This specificity allowed them to apply reciprocal determinism to the organizational culture issue of safety in ways that provided a framework for analyzing and making clear the interactions between the three and the desired safety culture.

Using organizational culture theory Barley (1983) conducted a case study using ethnosemantic methods to understand the themes that characterize a work world and the rules by which organizational stakeholders generate meaning. His use of semiotics to understand organizational culture provides a device to analyze the meaning of a phenomenon within an organizational setting. Martin and Siehl’s (1983) work has determined that culture is not monolithic and that having more than one culture present within an organization can mediate leadership objectives, differentiate functions rather than integrate them, and may provide evidence that culture is not created by one source or controlled, but simply exists and evolves. Schall (1983) used a communication-rules perspective to determine group culture. Within this work, culture is a rule-based phenomenon, which means that stakeholders’ interpretations of their experience and actions are determined by systematic rules that state what people should and should not do. Pettigrew (1979) used a longitudinal-processual (or historical) approach to study the past, present, and future of organizations. To understand organizational culture, Pettigrew
examined organizational change within a school through a series of social dramas, or historical events. This provided insight into the development of culture, longitudinally.

These works illustrate a range of applications of the theories of organizational culture to a study such as the one presented here. Most notably, organizational culture could provide a means to understand the rules that govern the acquisition and adoption of democratically oriented processes and roles and also a window into the sustainability of the orientation over time and in light of competing cultures within the partnership. Its use within community-university partnership research may also be a unique contribution to the scholarship on community engagement.

**Partnership identity theory.** Another theoretical perspective that could be useful in analyzing democratically oriented processes and roles is partnership identity theory. According to Janke (2008), partnership identity theory grows from social identity and organizational identity theories and suggests that a stakeholder’s actions are influenced by the identity of the group. Partnership identity is

…tentatively defined as a cognitive state in which boundary-spanners…come to identify themselves and their partners as members of a partnership, an organizational entity which may have its own distinct and enduring missions, values, and norms. (p. 70)

Janke (2009) outlined four characteristics of partnership identity: a) unified missions, b) feelings of membership in a distinctive entity, c) organizational structures, and d) expectations to endure changes in resources and membership.

Brinkerhoff (2002) includes partnership identity as one of her targets of analyses within her work on developing an evaluation framework for partnership relationships.
Within the target of partnership identity, she includes partnership organization culture, values, mission, name recognition, and constituencies. Brinkerhoff feels partnership identity is one indicator of success within a partnership. Other work also points to partnership identity being an indicator of quality. In the context of community based research, partnership identity is seen as a dimension of community and partnership capacity for collaborative work and is described as the ability of a stakeholder to identity with the partnership’s shared values and its research and action commitments (Meredith Minkler, Vasquez, Tajik, & Petersen, 2006). Interestingly, Minkler et al. (2006) position partnership identity as “we’re in this together” (p. 132), whereas Janke positions it more as “who we are” (2009, p. 83).

Perhaps the most poignant distinction between the application of reciprocal determinism and partnership identity to this study is the ability to investigate a phenomenon within a partnership even if it is not the stated and agreed upon mission and value set of the group. Reciprocal determinism provides the latitude to investigate an orientation such as democratic engagement though members of the partnership would not articulate the purpose and mission of RiseNature to be a democratically engaged community-university partnership. Partnership identity theory would stress this phenomenon be overt in the mission and vision of the group and would then assert that to the degree that identity is embraced, stakeholder actions and roles would be guided. One of the interesting contributions partnership identity theory can make to future study on democratically engaged partnerships is the inclusion of partnership values within the analysis framework. In this way, it is complementary to organizational culture theories and may have similar implications for future research.
Tension Between Efficiency and Democratic Orientation

**Function of efficiency in partnerships.** Efficiency is portrayed in the inter-organizational literature as a reason to begin or enter into partnership (M. C. Cooper & Gardner, 1993). Within public health intervention literature, efficiency is an indication of a partnership’s success or synergy (Weiss et al., 2002). In either form, it appears to be a powerful attractor for those working in partnerships and inter-organizational relationships. Within the RiseNature case, a significant tension was demonstrated between the desire for efficiency and the current processes being used. In particular, this was indicated by stakeholders’ comments about the amount of time the group spent collectively writing or wordsmithing its partnership documents, deliberation being bogged down by stakeholders new to the conversation, and being overwhelmed by the volume of information available through technology such as the Wiki. One of the partnership’s responses to these inefficiencies was to adopt a subcommittee structure that would eliminate the necessity of all stakeholders discussing and working on all tasks.

Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) consider efficiency to be one of the five attributes that contribute to partnership synergy, as it affects how the partnership engages partners, maintains good relationships, and synthesizes what the partners bring to the table. They found that efficiency is most concerned with how well the partnership maximizes stakeholder involvement. Winer and Ray (1994) also see efficiency as indicative of partnership success and suggest that creation of flexible structures (that can change to accommodate the partnership’s needs) and having a good match between stakeholder interest and skills and the roles and responsibilities they assume is key to being effective.
Structures that promote efficiency. The Wilder Report on Collaboration (Winer & Ray, 1994) suggests that most inter-organizational collaborations conform to one of two group structures: the table or the wheel. Table-like structures bring all members together for the business of the collaboration, and usually all members are involved in decision-making. Wheel-like structures have small groups that perform the functions of the group and a small group in the middle to whom the subgroups report or with whom they confer. At the conclusion of the study, RiseNature was moving from a table structure to a wheel structure and negotiating the ways their work would change as a result. Some members commented on the need to divide tasks among the groups and their process for choosing subcommittee members depended largely on stakeholders assigning themselves based on their expertise and skills. Some members commented on their desire to retain the large group process of deliberation even though the subcommittees would take on disparate working agendas.

Tension between efficiency and democratic engagement. For this study, the relevance of efficiency and corresponding structural changes lies in the perceived tension that exists between efficiency and democratic engagement. Group writing can represent joint efforts to work collaboratively. Welcoming new members into meaningful partnership deliberations is a form of inclusion. Housing all partnership notes and records of deliberations through a public Wiki site is the partnership’s effort at transparency. Within this particular case study, there existed a tension between these elements of democratic engagement and the group’s desire for efficiency. This raises a question of whether tension is inherent between the efficiency we generally seek and the processes of democratic engagement. This is not to say that democratic engagement promotes
inefficiency, but that the processes of democratic engagement (such as deliberation, inclusion, and shared problem solving) may challenge the norms of a society in which work is divided, expertise is leveraged for specific tasks, and those in the decision-making positions may not include people most affected by the issues being faced. As was discussed earlier in the study, we live in a technocratic culture that values efficiency gained through technical-expert provision of service (Akin, 1977).

Though democratic engagement refers to a grouping of values and processes for community engagement, its political meaning can be instructive as the issue of efficiency is considered. In “Stealth Democracy: American Beliefs About How Government Should Work,” Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) have data that suggest that most people prefer decisions be made by empathetic others, i.e. experts. The populous generally does not seek a direct democracy. They go on to explain that within American culture, “people are surprisingly smitten with the notion of elite experts making choices – provided these experts have nothing to gain from selecting one option over another” (p. 86). This work points to an enduring culture of preferring other-centered technical experts who make decisions on our behalf. The idea of a direct democracy and direct involvement in deliberation can be uncomfortable for those who have not experienced it.

Technocratic influences. A technocratic culture values efficiency, coordination of people and resources, and collective human power through systematization. When a matter exceeds the competence of the average person, the involvement of an expert is demanded, promulgating a culture of yielding to those who know better and who can be more productive (Roszak, 1968). This culture is arguably dominant in post-industrial
American society and certainly influences the way we view our large scale and day-to-day interactions.

The RiseNature pursuit of efficiency is important as the partnership seeks to accomplish its larger goals of natural resource preservation. However, the implication of this in relation to a democratic orientation is that the pursuit of efficiency through devolved decision-making and compartmentalization of tasks by expertise may be the default solution in a normative culture of technocracy. Just as the fish swimming in its bowl is unconscious of the water that surrounds it, we may well be ignorant of the technocratic influences that pervade our approach to partnership and engagement.

Technocracy assumes a position similar to that of the purely neutral umpire in an athletic contest. The umpire is normally the least obtrusive person on the scene. Why? Because we give our attention and passionate allegiance to the teams, who compete within the rules; we tend to ignore the man who stands above the contest and who simply interprets and enforces the rules. Yet, in a sense, the umpire is the most significant figure in the game, since he alone sets the limits and goals of the competition and judges the contenders. (Roszak, 1968, p. 20)

Considering this further might be a fruitful area for scholarship on democratic engagement. Questions could be generated such as, how can a democratic orientation lead to an efficient outcome for community-university partnerships? What effect does our normative technocratic culture have on those qualities of partnership we perceive to produce success and to build partner capacity? Does the tension that surfaced within the RiseNature partnership indicate an inherent tension between the outcomes and process within any partnership orientation framework or is it solely present within a democratic
engagement framework? If efficiency is symbolic of maximizing stakeholder involvement (Lasker et al., 2001), how is this complementary to the democratic processes of inclusion and deliberation? Pursuing answers to these questions may help to move forward democratic engagement and to better understand the role it plays in partnerships in which the primary mission is not to operate democratically but to democratically solve problems and to serve the larger public.

Socialization and Induction

One of the findings pertaining to the partnership learning interactions within RiseNature is that there was no formal or intentional mechanism through which new members were introduced to the democratic processes and values of the group. There was one telephone call held between the chair people and a member who was replacing someone, and this was held at the request of the chair people due to the unusual nature of the new stakeholder’s position: she was located outside of the county that RiseNature serves and was more than an hour away from the partnership. The chair people were as interested in understanding how her involvement (and her organization’s involvement) could be continued despite those complications as they were of informing her of RiseNature’s history and purpose. During the phone call, logistic details were discussed, as were some of the ways that the new stakeholder could contribute to the partnership, but no conversation was held on how the group typically works together or what types of collaborative values they employ.

This lack of induction is important because the group was also experiencing a turnover in membership over the past few years and had employed a new strategy to retain organizations as members even when individuals from the organizations changed. One of
the themes that emerged within the study was a concern for the security of the group’s working style and path of progress in light of changing membership.

Organizational development literature can provide a starting point for understanding the ways that induction, or socialization, may impact the partnership. Socialization encompasses the ways in which a person learns what behavior is appropriate within a group through his or her interactions with others from the group (Brim, 1966). Within a workplace group setting, Van Maanen (1978) found that of several forms of socialization, an organization’s strategies to socialize an individual have a stronger influence than the personal differences among individuals when determining how people acquire the social knowledge and skills of a group. Jones (1986) later found that of the organizational strategies identified by Van Maanen, informal and individualized techniques were more effective than formal, institutional programs. Baker and Feldman (1990) questioned the preference of informal over institutional strategies and found that this had little impact when compared with the consistency of socialization, though they note that for small organizations, individualized socialization may make more sense.

An additional area for future research may be to translate this organizational development scholarship to the study of community-university partnerships in hopes of understanding how particular orientations can be sustained through member socialization. Another area of future research specific to democratic engagement would be to understand the function of informal, interpersonal socialization into the democratic processes and roles within a partnership. Specific to RiseNature, the notion of preparing members for participation births other questions: How will “full membership” be
transmitted as people leave the partnership? How has the group’s decision to create membership identity around organizations impacted their inclusion of citizen stakeholders? These questions exist for other similar democratically engaged partnerships in which there is member turn over and in which organizations are the unit of membership.

**Relationship Between Social Involvement and Personal Democratic Orientation**

One of the areas of discovery within this study is that the stakeholders who sat at the core of the partnership and most often promoted the democratic orientation of the partnership were also heavily involved in social pursuits such as being active within community organizations, taking leadership roles within neighborhood associations, participating in the social activities of their faith communities, taking on public serving work as part of their professions, and generally being civically active. They identified with the term “joiner” though their involvement in these activities went well beyond membership to encompass participation and even leadership. This finding is particularly important for democratic engagement though it fits with common sense. It may provide additional avenues for research. Better understanding the link between participation in public life and the attributes one brings to a community-university partnership is important.

In his work on building social capital through public association (2000) Putnam spends a great deal of time exploring the effect of one’s community involvement on one’s civic skills and dispositions. The RiseNature core group’s affinity for “joining” reflects Putnam’s use of the Yiddish word “machers,” or those who make things happen in the community. These stakeholders fit well within the group of Americans that he describes
as developing thick networks of social and civic connections through their diverse public activities. By virtue of the significant decline within American community group involvement, the core group of RiseNature is significantly more involved than most of the populous. Their involvement tends to focus on those activities that promote community projects (founding citizen action groups, inventorifying wildlife, developing neighborhood civic associations, etc.), rather than one-to-one volunteering or philanthropy.

At a minimum, we can infer that people who regularly participate in public life have a greater capacity for collective interests (John Stuart Mills in R. D. Putnam, 2000). People with similar social involvement to those of the core RiseNature group tend to have developed what Putnam calls a coherent syndrome: “civic involvement, reciprocity, honesty, and social trust” (p. 137). Kirlin (2003) puts together an analogous list of characteristics including skills in organization, communication, collective decision-making, and critical thinking. Most of these skills and dispositions are critical to enacting democratic engagement, particularly the drive to get involved in collective decision-making and to cultivate reciprocity and trust. Active participation in civic engagement promotes cooperation, public-spiritedness, an appreciation for inclusivity, and nurtures the skills necessary to engage in public processes. These are democratic habits.

Personal commitment or competency in publicness (D. Barker, 2004) is not a foregrounded element discussed within any of the foundational pieces on democratic engagement. Investigating more closely the links between prior civic, social, and public engagement and the contribution of democratic habits to community-university partnerships is promising. To begin with, it would be advantageous to understand how
members who do not posses democratic skills and dispositions influence a partnership’s orientation. If they do not posses those qualities, and the partnership seeks to implement or retain a democratic orientation, this area of scholarship appears linked to socialization: how do partnerships encourage the development of democratic skills and dispositions among their members concurrent to their participation in the partnership? Perhaps most important, given the emphasis placed on inclusion in democratically engaged partnerships, is learning how best to promote the participation of diverse people in these pursuits. Many people who are affected by social problems and who have great practical knowledge of those problems do not participate in public processes. Assuming the validity of Bandura’s (1986) assertion that people’s skills and interests dictate the groups to which they are attracted, then by what means should democratically engaged partnerships attract and maintain stakeholders who have not developed a predilection for democratically oriented collaboration but who have great practical knowledge of problems of interest to a democratically engaged partnership?

**Limitations of the Study**

The research method used in this study is an explanatory case study intended to examine the causal relationship between a number of factors and the phenomenon of democratic engagement within community-university partnerships. This design, and the conduct of the study in its specific context carries a variety of limitations. These limitations include the representativeness of the case, the availability of pertinent information, analytic decisions, and validity or trustworthiness of the interpretations. Finally, the design necessitates future iterations.
Representativeness of the case. Within all case study research design, the primary concern is selecting a case that is representative of the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, representativeness has two aims: that the case represent the phenomenon of democratic engagement and that it represent the phenomenon of community-university partnership. Great efforts were made to ensure that the case was representative of both. A lengthy and detailed selection process was used to select the case from among vetted community-university partnerships and to determine its democratic leanings. The study could have used more than one vetting source, and though this was considered within the original study design, it was omitted for fit with the intent of the study and due to time limitations. The vetting source that was used best fit with the way that community-university partnership was being defined and with its emphasis on entire partnerships as units of interest (as opposed to engaged faculty, or public policy projects, etc.).

The second limitation of this study is its reliance on one case. According to Creswell (2007), using only one case to investigate a phenomena can thin the analysis, though he says analysis of multiple cases can lead to less depth. The choice to embed the study in one case maintained fidelity to explanatory case method. In this particular form of case study research, an explanatory proposition is developed, investigated within a case, revised, and consequently additional cases and revisions are pursued until the explanation can no longer be refined and can contribute to theory building. The strength of pursuing one case is the depth that was achieved within the study. The researcher spent 31 days with the participants, partnership setting, and important sites. Though this
particular iteration only includes one case, there will be more in the future from which thicker analysis may be drawn.

One of the difficulties produced within the study was the effect of only seeing the partnership during one period of time. Though document review provided historical notes about the partnership’s previous actions, first-hand observation of participant reflections was limited to the present time period. This, too, is aligned with case study design that is used to investigate contemporary phenomena (Yin, 1981). Developing the case over a longer period of time (perhaps a year or so) would have been preferable to understand the impact of changing the group structure and the influence of membership changes.

The final limitation related to the case selection was that there were no negative cases (Emigh, 1997) available that matched the circumstances and contexts in such a way as to lead to comparison analysis. Looking for negative cases within this study might yield new and interesting study designs. For example, it may be possible to switch the unit of analysis from partnership to stakeholder and to continue analysis with this data set so that, for example, stakeholders who demonstrated a high degree of public participation might be contrasted with those who did not.

**Availability of pertinent information.** Pertaining to the availability of pertinent information, the access given in this case was extremely abundant. Partnership stakeholders made themselves available for all interview requests, took it upon themselves to gather additional documents and artifacts that were not readily available to the researcher, and granted free access to all of their meetings and events. The sole limitation here is that one partnership stakeholder was unable to participate over the length of the study. She opted to provide one short interview but was unable to provide
any additional information or opinions. Her role within the group was as a core member (one of the original founders) and as a citizen participant. Her story was important to the overall set of findings and was truncated due to her time constraints.

The other limitation of information is the omission of one social condition in the consideration of influences external to the partnership. The case was bounded to include the social, political, and organizational conditions in which the partnership operated. One set of social conditions were omitted as they appeared to be outside the capability of the researcher to fully document and analyze: geographical culture. This particular case occurred in the southeastern region of the United States. As do all regions, this locale has a particular culture that may or may not have influenced how the partnership stakeholders worked with one another. Specifically, it may be that individuals living in this area are more likely to maintain polite relations with one another or to be more judicious in their inclusion of people into their efforts. These influences cannot be confirmed and were not considered as part of the study. The culture of the locale was generally not pondered within the analysis. If one were to replicate the case, that researcher may want to expand the study’s parameters to include such influences.

**Analytic decisions.** The analytic decisions made within the study design also hold some limitations. Specifically, an explanatory case method is one that embraces a complex network of factors that interact to elicit a phenomenon (Yin, 1993). This complexity can lead an inexperienced researcher to conflate or confuse factors during the analytic phase of the study. Eisenhardt (1989) spoke of this complexity within his own use of explanatory case studies and noted that careful attention must be paid not to over-complicate the explanatory proposition or the analysis of its fit. To manage the
complexity of the data collected and observed in this study, the researcher stayed close to the guiding research questions to help partition the data and to organize them in logical, accessible groupings. The volume of tables indicates the ways in which the researcher organized the data and clarified their relationships for the reader.

The other limitation related to data analysis is the strong reliance on a priori codes dictated by the theoretical framework. Though in vivo coding was used, and many themes arose outside of the a priori categories, it could be argued that the design was limited by the influence the theoretical framework exerted within the data analysis.

**Validity or trustworthiness of the interpretations.** The last class of limitations concern validity or trustworthiness of the findings. Researcher bias is a concern for all types of research, qualitative among them (Glesne, 2006). Prior to the start of the study, the researcher noted her assumptions and biases as a higher education community engagement administrator and also as someone whose views of the role of higher education are influenced by her experiences pre and during college. Throughout the study, the subjective lens was monitored through field notations. The researcher felt an affinity for the members of RiseNature and held an appreciation for the work they were doing. To ensure that the interpretations being made were credible in light of her feelings toward the partnership and its members, member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Glesne, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994) was used in such a way that the participants were able to see their own words in relation to the overarching themes identified within the study. With the exception of wanting to smooth their language (correcting for grammar and clarity), participants felt the interpretations were accurate. Peer review (Creswell & Miller, 2000) was also used through the analysis and writing phase. In
particular, dissertation committee members assisted in helping the researcher to accurately reflect the themes that were emerging, and the researcher used a process in which she gathered a circle of critical thought partners to hear a review of findings and question her interpretations and implications.

The final limitation of the study is the inability to generalize the findings of this particular case to other cases. However, this was not the intent of the study. This design included one case study in which the explanatory proposition was explored. Earlier within this chapter, that proposition was refined. The process of explanatory case study is to develop a sequence of iterative refinements to the proposition using different cases. Thus, the limitation lies not in the choice of design. Further, this case study was intended to shed light on ways democratic engagement is exhibited and enacted in democratically engaged partnerships. The depth of the analysis provided here is an excellent starting point for further research and a valuable contribution to scholarship on community-university partnerships.

Summary of Future Research Areas and Implications for the Practice of Community Engagement

Throughout this chapter, implications of this study for further research have been discussed and are summarized in Table 24, entitled Implications for Future Research Displayed by Area of Finding.

Table 24: Implications for Future Research Displayed by Area of Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Finding</th>
<th>Implications for Future Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of Technocratic Orientation in Democratic Engagement</td>
<td>How does a democratically engaged partnership utilize technocratic processes and roles to realize a democratic orientation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What effect do technocratically oriented activities have on an overall democratic orientation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Reciprocal Determinism</td>
<td>Reduce the scope of the study to investigate dyadic pairs of determinants. For example, What influence do conditions that locate a community-university</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Leadership** | What influence do leaders assert on a democratic orientation?  
| What influence do followers assert on a democratic orientation?  
| What include does the leader-follower relationship exert on a democratic orientation?  
| How might leader-member exchange theory (LMX) provide a framework for understanding the role of leadership in democratically oriented partnerships?  
| How might LMX provide a framework for understanding the structures, processes, and stakeholder roles of the partnership?  
| How might having two faculty members as chair people influence the tensions felt around meeting location, frequency of meetings, and emphasis placed on wordsmithing?  
| How might having two faculty members as chair people strengthen the university’s commitment and/or weaken community-based organization commitment to the partnership? |

| **Adoption of Democratic Orientation** | How has the introduction of a subcommittee structure influenced RiseNature’s democratic orientation?  
| How might Bandura’s attributes of adoption (anticipated incentives, self-evaluative reactions, and resources) provide a framework to understand the full adoption of a democratic orientation within a partnership? Within an institution? |

| **Time** | Do particular stakeholder attributes contribute to the development of a democratic orientation within a new partnership?  
| Is a democratic orientation facilitative of success throughout all phases of a partnership’s lifespan? |

| **Theoretical Applications** | How might theories of organizational culture provide a means to understand the rules that govern the acquisition and adoption of democratically oriented processes and roles?  
| How do competing cultures within the partnership affect the sustainability of a democratic orientation over time?  
| How might partnership values be included as a determinant of a democratic orientation? |

| **Efficiency** | Is there an inherent tension between efficiency and democratic engagement?  
| How can a democratic orientation lead to an efficient outcome for community-university partnerships?  
| What effect does our normative technocratic culture have on those qualities of partnership we perceive to produce success and to build partner capacity?  
| If efficiency is symbolic of maximizing stakeholder involvement, how is this complementary to the democratic processes of inclusion and deliberation? |

| **Socialization/Induction** | How does member socialization affect the sustainability of a democratic orientation?  
| What is the function of informal, interpersonal socialization to the democratic processes and roles within a partnership?  
| In those instances in which partnerships use organizational affiliation as the unit of membership, what is the role of citizen involvement? |

| **Social Involvement/Publicness** | What is the link between participation in public life and the attributes one brings to a community-university partnership?  
| How do members who do not possess democratic skills and dispositions influence a partnership’s orientation?  
| How do partnerships encourage the development of democratic skills and dispositions among their members concurrent to their participation in the partnership?  
| By what means should democratically engaged partnerships attract and |
This explanatory case also has a number of implications for those community-university partnerships that hope to enact a democratic orientation. Though there is general support in the community-university partnership literature for practice, this study offers implications for support in a number of critical areas to democratic engagement.

**A democratic orientation is both acquired and adopted.** Following Bandura’s (1978, 1986) theory that social practices are first acquired then adopted, partners should discuss the way they want to relate to one another. Within this study, the case demonstrated the fluidity of a democratic orientation and findings point toward a relationship between the phase in a lifespan of a partnership and democratic processes. Though the partnership may not express democratic engagement as its primary mission, this study suggests being clear on the means by which stakeholders engage one another is important to creating a shared understanding and appreciation for democratic engagement. Partnerships should also consider the means they have to sustain the adoption of democratic engagement. Bandura proposes that adoption relies on anticipated incentives or benefit, self-evaluative reactions such as those people adopt that align to their beliefs and values or personal attributes, and resources such as money, skills, and accessory resources. Partnership stakeholders should discuss the benefits of having a democratic orientation and what that means for the group’s processes and roles. The partnership should determine if they have the necessary skills to effectively encourage deliberation, inclusion, and collaboration on their joint work.
Member socialization is critical for transmission of democratic practices. The present study suggests that for those members who are new to the partnership, partnership learning interactions help members understand the type of interactions they will encounter in a democratically engaged partnership. As was discussed earlier, individual, informal socialization such as partnership leaders having a conversation with a new member might be preferable to a formal, partnership-wide process. Unique to RiseNature was the number of partnership members who participated in the Natural Resources Institute. This type of training attended to the skills necessary for collaborative problem solving, consensus seeking, and dialogue. Some type of training may be necessary for those members who have never engaged in such democratic habits.

Ground the work of the partnership in the public sphere. RiseNature’s development was brought about by citizens who had been engaged in a public process. Its ongoing efforts continued to be a part of the public sphere and involved civic processes such as appealing to legislators and connecting the partnership’s work to other civic committees and citizen concerns. Community-university partnerships that wish to develop a democratic orientation must also consider how their work is relevant to public processes and resolution of public issues.

Foster inclusion, deliberation, and transparency. As found in this case the processes central to democratic engagement are those that bring diverse stakeholders to the table, engage those stakeholders in deliberative dialogue, and transparently portray the work of the partnership. Paying attention to these processes and making room for them within the operations of the partnership is important.
Partnership leadership has impact on a partnership’s democratic orientation. Within the RiseNature case, partnership leadership had a large hand in promoting democratic processes and roles. The findings of this study appear to indicate that having partnership leadership (be it a singular person or collaborative leadership) that understands democratic engagement and its associated processes and roles is imperative. In addition to having an understanding of this orientation, it is also important that the leadership have the skills necessary to steward a democratic process. Making space for inclusion, deliberation, and transparency is the responsibility of all partnership stakeholders but is often enacted by partnership leadership.

Technology can be used to facilitate inclusion, efficiency, and transparency. RiseNature is a case in which technology played a large role in promoting democratic processes. Not all community-university partnerships have the stakeholder familiarity with technologies such as Wiki sites to utilize them effectively, but they may be advantageous for those partnerships in which technology is easily acquired and understood. In this way, efficiency may be promoted in ways complementary to a democratic orientation. Based on the findings of this study, it appears that technology can be a facilitator of inclusion, efficiency, and transparency.

Promote consensus seeking through deliberation. Partnerships that seek to build consensus among members should embrace deliberation and provide the necessary time to have productive deliberation. RiseNature often extended matters of discussion over two or more meetings to assure all possible stakeholders were able to provide input and had time to consider the opinions and information brought to the table.
Balance democratic processes with efficient action. Noticing when the partnership is getting bogged down is important as is taking actions to reduce stagnancy. Though inclusion, deliberation, and consensus seeking are critical, there comes a point in time when the partnership must move forward with its business having given time and attention to these processes.

Conclusion

Drawing on the conceptual framework of democratic engagement (Jameson et al., 2011; Kellogg Commission, 1998; Saltmarsh et al., 2009) and the theoretical framework of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977, 1978, 1986), this study utilized a qualitative explanatory case study method to evaluate an explanatory proposition in which reciprocal determinants (including conditions external to the partnership, stakeholder attributes, and partnership learning interactions) influenced the adoption and enactment of democratically oriented processes and roles. Interviews, observation, and document review produced data that were used to answer the study’s research questions. Findings of particular significance include the existence of conditions that located the partnership in the context of citizen action, public process, and inter-organizational collaboration. Learning interactions were documented in which members empowered one another to participate fully by directly stating the type of participation that was desired and holding one another accountable to that, events included dialogue and reflection on the processes of collaboration; and a significant number of stakeholders participated in a formalized curriculum that reinforced inclusive dialogue, consensus building, and collaborative problem solving. Individual stakeholders demonstrated attributes that featured depth of social involvement in relation to the depth of their partnership involvement. Leaders who
embraced a democratic orientation promoted a structure and facilitation techniques that created space for transparency, deliberation, and inclusion of diverse stakeholders. These findings were also considered in light of other realities of the study. The case was conducted during a specific window of time and was only able to capture a snapshot of the partnership over its lifetime. Though observed, the influence of determinants set forth in the design of the study (external conditions, stakeholder attributes, and partnership learning interactions) were asynchronous and unequal in force. The final reality of the study is that not all of the elements of the partnership were democratically oriented although the partnership generally holds a democratic orientation. The major findings and further consideration of the realities of the study provided the necessary revisions to refine the explanatory proposal so that it can be further explored with greater specificity.
References


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